

King condoles the Kabaritis

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein called on Friday at former Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti's residence and condoled him over the death of his mother, Huriyah. The Kabariti and Qunash families paid tribute to King Hussein's noble gesture and wished him a good and happy life. Meanwhile, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Friday called on Senator Habes Majali who is recuperating at the King Hussein Medical Centre. Senator Majali is reported to be well.

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'The Saint of the Gutters', Mother Teresa, dead at 87



Mother Teresa
1910-1997

CALCUTTA (AFP) — Mother Teresa, who died here Friday, devoted her entire life to alleviating the plight of the world's destitute, a role that won her acclaim as a living saint and earned her a Nobel Peace Prize.

The legendary Roman Catholic nun, who turned 87 in August, handed over the reins of the Missionaries of Charity, the religious order she founded in March because of her fragile health after 47 years of service to the "poorest of the poor."

"The Saint of the Gutters," as she became known, leaves behind an organization with around 4,400 sisters and brothers in 600 homes across the globe.

This same nun, years ago, was described as "a novice who would not even know how to light a candle."

The diminutive Mother Teresa, however, has never worried about what others have said about her, particularly those who have acclaimed her as a living saint.

"I am only an instrument," she has often said.

playing down the work which earned her the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 and a series of other highly-regarded distinctions, all of which she accepted in the name of the underprivileged.

Born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu on August 26, 1910 in Skopje of Albanian parents, she left home at the age of 18 to join the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Dublin and was later sent on to India.

In 1948, the year she became an Indian citizen, she left her convent and began work on her own, a move which did not impress Calcutta Archbishop Monsignor Ferdinand Periers.

"I know this woman, she is a novice who would not even know how to light a candle in chapel... how can she create a congregation?" he said.

Alone and without a base, Sister Agnes became Teresa. She donned a blue-trimmed white sari, which became the uniform of her Missionaries of Charity when it was formally

(Continued on page 2)

12 Israeli commandos killed in disastrous operation in Lebanon

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAELI SAID on Friday 10 marine commandos and a military medical officer were killed and a 12th soldier was missing and presumed dead after its costliest clash in Lebanon since 1985.

The bungled undercover raid followed the killing of four young Israelis in a triple suicide bombing in the heart of Jerusalem just 10 hours earlier.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, responding to the double trauma, vowed that Israel would not howl to "depraved terrorists" on either front.

"These murderers will not annihilate Israel," he said. Israeli Chief of Staff Amnon Shahak said the commando force had landed on the Lebanese coast north of the city of Tyre. He said explosives they were carrying had blown up when they were ambushed by guerrillas.

"Explosive devices were activated against the force and it also fell under light weapons fire. It appears that this fire or the detona-

tion of the devices activated explosives carried by one of our fighters," Mr. Shahak told a news conference in Tel Aviv.

Mr. Netanyahu told Israeli television it was unlikely that the guerrillas had been



A Lebanese soldier surveys the scene after fierce clashes between Lebanese army troops and Israeli forces in the village of Insarrah, in south Lebanon, Friday. At least 12 Israeli soldiers were killed in the clashes early on Friday, a security source in Lebanon said (Reuters photo)

inquiry into what went wrong.

In Lebanon, a security source said Lebanese army troops and guerrillas from

tipped off about the commando operation but said the possibility could not be ruled out.

Mr. Shahak said an intelligence leak was unlikely but would be investigated as part of a thorough

(Continued on page 2)

Israel arrests 69 Palestinians, urges U.S. to push Arafat against Islamists

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAELI SECURITY forces rounded up 69 Palestinians Friday after suicide bombers struck again in the heart of west Jerusalem, the army said.

Israel urged the U.S. to pile pressure on Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to act against Islamists himself.

A military statement said the Palestinians were arrested in the West Bank on suspicion of involvement in "hostile terrorist activity."

Three young men, one dressed as a woman, killed themselves and four other people in a defiant attack in a crowded pedestrian mall in Jewish west Jerusalem Thursday.

Police said 192 people were wounded.

With U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright due in the Middle East next

week, a spokesman for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said no movement in the peace process was possible as long as Mr. Arafat failed to fight the bombers.

"The United States is the only one with the power and influence in this area and in the whole world who can persuade Mr. Arafat to do what he must do," David Bar Ilan, Mr. Netanyahu's media chief, told Israel radio.

"If it doesn't succeed, no one will succeed. If the war on terrorism won't begin to get serious, there is no hope for the peace process," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu convened a meeting of his security cabinet early Friday.

The military wing of Hamas claimed responsibility for the triple suicide bombing on Ben Yehuda street, a short stroll from a Jerusalem market where 17 people were blown up five

weeks ago.

Three of Thursday's dead were schoolgirls who were strolling home with classmates. A man in his 20s was also killed by the bombers.

Israeli police advised the public to be on alert for more possible attacks and warned Jews against reacting violently to the bombing.

Two radical right-wing Jews were arrested in Jerusalem after they set fire to a parked car owned by an Arab, a police spokesman said.

U.S. President Bill Clinton said Ms. Albright would go ahead as planned with her mission next week to the Middle East, her first since she took office in January.

Mr. Clinton telephoned Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat, telling the Palestinian leader he had to take concrete action on security.

"The president made clear to Chairman Arafat that it is

in the deepest interest not only of the Israeli people, but the Palestinian people as well to mount a 100 per cent effort against the enemies of peace, among these enemies is Hamas," White House spokesman Joe Lockhart told reporters.

Mr. Arafat condemned the latest bombings as "terrorist activities" which harmed Israelis, Palestinians and the peace process but said he believed their masterminds were abroad.

He also criticized punitive measures taken by Israel following the July 30 suicide bombing, saying "collective punishment" of Palestinians bred fanaticism.

Following Thursday's bombing, Israel reimposed a closure on the West Bank and Gaza Strip which had been eased earlier in the week. It also threw up roadblocks around cities under self-rule, barring Palestinians from travelling between

(Continued on page 2)

King condoles Israeli people after bombing and condemns terrorism

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Thursday called Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by telephone to express Jordan's condemnation of the suicide bomb attacks in west Jerusalem expressing hope that the terrorist attacks would not adversely affect the peace process.

King Hussein said that all terrorist activities aim at ruining the peace process and imposing the agenda of the minority on the majority of peace-loving people in this region.

Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi expressed the Jor-

danian government's denunciation of the attacks and its regret over the acts of violence that target innocent civilians.

Dr. Mutawi who is also the official spokesman said: "We would like to reiterate once again our firm stand and our condemnation of all terrorist activities which are directed at civilians regardless of these activities sources and those standing behind them. The Jordanian government regards the continuation of such acts by small extremist elements as an attempt to try to impose their agenda on the majority of the people in this region whose hopes

have been revived recently with the resumption of the peace process following the announcement that the U.S. secretary of state was planning to visit the region and at a time when the Palestinian and Israeli delegations are in Washington discussing the secretary's visit with the U.S. administration."

The spokesman called for the continuation of international efforts to save the peace process and reestablish confidence among the concerned parties to create the necessary environment for peace.



WEST JERUSALEM BOMBING: A badly wounded Israeli covered in blood is taken away from the central Jerusalem shopping street Thursday (Reuters photo)



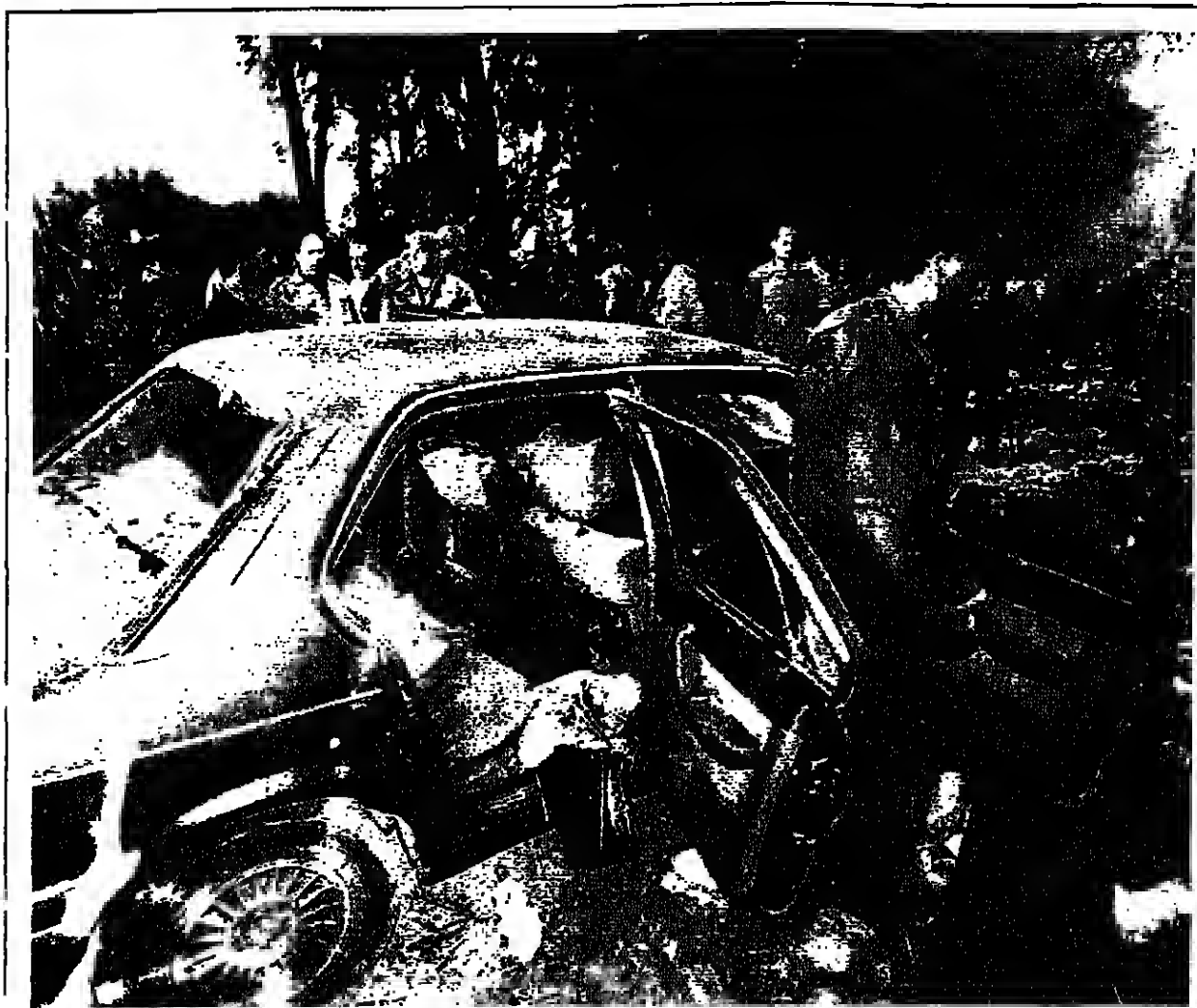
WEST JERUSALEM BOMBING: A badly wounded Israeli man covered in blood and lying in broken glass is given medical assistance Thursday (Reuters photo)



WEST JERUSALEM BOMBING: Israeli police stand over the partial body of one of the three suicide bombers who blew themselves up Thursday (Reuters photo)



Ultra-religious Jews scrape bits of flesh off the road. According to Jewish custom, all pieces of a person's body must be buried with them (Reuters photo)



A Lebanese policeman inspects a car in which a Lebanese woman lies dead in Insariah, where Israeli commandos clashed with Lebanese fighters early Friday (see story on page 1) (AFP photo)

2 Israeli commandos killed in disastrous operation in Lebanon

(Continued from page 1)

Hizbollah and Amal movements battled the Israeli commandos in addition to the Lebanese army.

Mr. Netanyahu, a former commando himself, called it the worst such incident he could recall "in 20 years of following these things" but said it would not prompt a radical rethink of Israel's military policies in Lebanon.

The clash took place outside the 15-kilometre deep self-declared Israeli occupied zone in south Lebanon.

The death toll was the highest since Israel pulled the bulk of its 1982 invasion forces out of Lebanon in 1985 and occupied the self-declared zone with the declared aim of protecting northern Israel from guerrilla raids.

"As long as there are attacks against us in an attempt to harm the state of Israel and settlements in the north... we have no choice but to take defensive measures inside Lebanon itself," Mr. Netanyahu said. "This policy will not change."

The missing man was presumed to have been the soldier carrying the high-powered explosives. The medical officer, a Druze Arab, formed part of a search and rescue force sent in by Israel to evacuate the dead and four wounded.

Mr. Shuhak gave no details about the operation in which the force was engaged beyond saying it was there "to fight terror activities."

Israel has frequently mounted undercover raids north of its security zone against Hizbollah guerrillas.

News photographers in Lebanon took pictures of a Lebanese soldier holding the charred and severed head of an Israeli after the clashes in the village of Insariah, south Lebanon.

In Beirut, Hizbollah Secretary General Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah said the group was holding no live Israeli prisoners.

"We have puns of bodies including four legs and half a head... which we will make use of in the framework of future swaps," he told a news conference.

According to Jewish tradition, all human remains must receive a ritual burial, making the body parts potentially valuable for Hizbollah in any bargaining with Israel.

A security source in Lebanon said: "There was an Israeli commando operation at around 1:00 a.m. [Friday] in the area. The Lebanese army, Hizbollah and Amal movement fighters clashed with Israeli forces, killing and wounding a number of them."

The body of Samira Asmar, a Palestinian

woman aged about 30, was still inside a BMW car on a road in Insariah, an AFP journalist on the scene reported.

Two Lebanese army soldiers were wounded when Israeli helicopters rocketed their positions in the area and four Amal movement guerrillas and two Hizbollah fighters were also injured in the ensuing clashes, security sources said.

A Lebanese army statement said civilians took part in the clashes with Israeli forces. The statement, quoting a military source, said the fighting killed a young girl in addition to the woman and wounded six other civilians.

It warned residents not to walk in the area for fear of bombs that may have been left behind by Israeli forces.

A security source in Lebanon said there was still confusion on the ground. "There are reports that dead Israelis and living Israelis were still near the battle area," the source told Reuters.

Amal, Lebanon's mainstream Shiite movement, said the Israeli commandos planned to attack one of its bases.

The fighting was unusual because the Lebanese army rarely gets involved in clashes in south Lebanon, site of frequent roadside bombings, and attacks with

rocket-propelled grenades and Katyusha rockets.

An Amal official said the group's fighters had retrieved 10 Israeli helmets from the battle site.

"Amal has 10 Israeli helmets and Hizbollah has 10 helmets," he told Reuters. Lebanese Parliamentary Speaker Nabih Berri said that the Israeli operation was aimed at destroying the headquarters of Amal.

Mr. Berri, who heads Amal, said the Israeli soldiers "were equipped with explosive charges to blow up the headquarters at Insariah where they were headed when they were intercepted... and annihilated."

A member of the Amal leadership, Ahmad Baalbaki, told reporters that his fighters intercepted the Israeli commandos "while they were preparing the explosives."

"Our firing set off the explosives in the middle of the Israeli commandos, reducing them to paste," Mr. Baalbaki said.

Shreds of flesh, bands, feet and a decapitated head were found among the blood splashed on abandoned Israeli military equipment, witnesses said.

Mr. Baalbaki estimated that there were between 20 to 30 soldiers in the Israeli commando squad.

The Israeli army has been placed on high alert on the border with Lebanon.

Netanyahu uses spy case to torpedo peace process — Al Ahram

CAIRO (AP) — A major Egyptian newspaper Friday accused Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of using the case of an Israeli convicted of spying in Egypt as a pretext to wreck the Middle East peace process.

Azzam Azzam, a member of Israel's Arab minority, was sentenced to 15 years at hard labour after a state security court found him guilty Sunday.

"It is unquestionable that the man who lost his mind is no one but Mr. Netanyahu," Al Ahram newspaper said in a front-page editorial signed by its editor-in-chief, Ibrahim Nafie.

"After he made an extraordinary effort to destroy

the Middle East peace process on all its tracks, he is now toiling to disturb the Egyptian-Israeli peace," Mr. Nafie wrote.

The editorial was published the day after Egyptian officials said Mr. Netanyahu sent a letter to the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak asking him to release Azzam.

Israel's ambassador to Egypt, Zvi Mazel, left Cairo for Jerusalem Friday. The Egyptian ambassador to Israel, Mohammad Bassiouni, returned to Cairo for consultations earlier in the week.

Al Ahram's editorial said Mr. Netanyahu should have apologised to Egypt "for the despicable act of sending a Mossad spy to Egypt

instead of making this diplomatic and media campaign."

Mr. Netanyahu and other Israeli leaders have insisted that Azzam, 34, was not an agent of any Israeli security service and have repeatedly appealed for his release.

The case against Azzam — the director of a textile factory in Egypt under joint Israeli-Egyptian ownership — included women's underwear allegedly soaked in invisible ink. An Egyptian was convicted as an accomplice and jailed for life with hard labour.

Under Egyptian law there is no appeal against the court's decision. The only recourse is a pardon by President Mubarak.

Al Ahram also said Mr.

Mubarak has returned a letter that Mr. Netanyahu had addressed to Azzam.

Mr. Netanyahu's spokesman, Shai Bazak, told reporters in Jerusalem Tuesday that the letter had been given to Mr. Bassiouni, the Egyptian ambassador, for delivery.

It said: "Dear Azzam, do not let your spirits drop. You are innocent and the state of Israel will not rest... until we see you in the bosom of your loving family."

Al Ahram said the letter had been delivered to Mr. Mubarak, who said it should have gone through diplomatic channels.

'The Saint of the Gutters', Mother Teresa, dead at 87

(Continued from page 1)

founded on October 7, 1950.

The Missionary Brothers of Charity followed, established in 1963.

Ever since, the organisation has focused on one central aim — serving the poor and the dying.

Some criticism of Mother Teresa has surfaced in

recent years, centred on her strictly orthodox views.

One British television film, which criticised her order for accepting money from dubious sources, was entitled "Hell's Angel: Mother Teresa."

She has angered feminists by opposing all methods of modern contraception, while orthodox Hindus have been suspicious of her

real motives, accusing her of trying to win converts.

In recent years, the caring Mother Teresa has increasingly needed to be cured for.

She was fitted with a pacemaker after a heart attack in 1989 and underwent operations for blocked arteries in 1991 and 1993.

At the end of last year, she had to survive heart

failure — her heart stopped beating for almost two minutes — and a heart attack complicated by malaria and pneumonia.

Mother Teresa had met Princess Diana four times, and on Friday an aide in Calcutta said she intended to offer special prayers on Saturday, the day of the funeral of the Princess of Wales.

Israel arrests 69 Palestinians, urges U.S. push Arafat to act against Islamists

(Continued from page 1)

own action if Palestinian police failed to move against the militants.

His warning hinted that Israeli forces could reenter areas handed over to Palestinian self-rule to snatch suspects.

"Every government reserves for itself the right to enter those areas where there is no opposition to terrorism and there is no repression of terrorism," Mr. Bar-Ilan said.

"We will do whatever is required to protect our citizens."

Also on Friday Israel announced it would hand over no new territory to the PNA and was ready to take action inside the self-rule areas following a deadly new suicide attack in Jerusalem.

"It is inconceivable that we hand more territory over to the Palestinians which would only serve as new bases for the terrorists," said Mr. Netanyahu a day after three suicide bombers killed four Israelis and wounded more than 150 in central Jerusalem.

Israeli Cabinet Secretary Danny Naveh added that "as long as the Palestinian National Authority does not honour its commitment to fight terrorism in territory under his control, Israel can hand no new land over to

it."

"Israel is going to fight terrorism, its bases and its infrastructure to ensure the security of its citizens, unilaterally and without coordination with the Palestinian [National] Authority," Mr. Naveh said following an emergency meeting of Netanyahu's top security aides to draw up a response to the suicide attack.

Mr. Naveh provided no details of what action would be taken, but Israel Radio said the security cabinet had approved "operational measures" which apparently could involve raids into self-rule areas in pursuit of suspected militants.

Mr. Netanyahu, at a press conference, gave no such details, saying only, "we are expecting large-scale operations [by the Palestinian National Authority] against the terrorist infrastructure" in areas under its control.

"If they do not do this, it is clear what we will," he said.

No Israeli action was expected however prior to a visit to the region next week by Mr. Albright, who Mr. Clinton said would focus her mission on improving Palestinian actions against terrorism.

While Israel has not identified the bombers who carried out Thursday's attack

or two men who blew themselves up in

Jerusalem's main market five weeks earlier killing 17 people, Mr. Netanyahu said the bombings "could not have been organised without the involvement of dozens of people to scout out the locations, build the bombs and transport them."

"For this, they need bases and Hamas carried out this attack from inside the Palestinian territories," he said, referring to the biggest Palestinian Islamist movement which claimed responsibility for the bombings.

Palestinian officials have warned that any unilateral Israeli operations into their areas would meet armed resistance and both sides agree this would lead to serious bloodshed and losses among both Israelis and Palestinians.

Since Thursday's bombings, Palestinian police arrested two senior West Bank Hamas leaders and seven to 10 other militants, but failed to launch a widescale roundup of armed activists as demanded by Israel and requested by Mr. Clinton in a Thursday night phone call to Mr. Arafat, U.S. and Israeli officials said.

Friday, Palestinian leaders deflected the call for a crackdown in the West Bank and Gaza Strip by

pointing the finger of blame outside their borders.

"There are Arab nations and other nations in the region which are working to sabotage the Israeli-Palestinian track of the peace process to prevent creation of a Palestinian state," said Tayeh Abdul Rahim, one of Mr. Arafat's top aides.

Mr. Abdul Rahim singled out Syria and Iran, who support the Lebanese Shiite militia Hizbollah, as being behind the Jerusalem suicide bombings and accused Israel of "hiding" evidence showing the bombers who attacked Jerusalem came from abroad.

Under signed peace accords, Israel is required to carry out three troop withdrawals from West Bank rural areas by August 1998.

A first pullback proposed in early March was rejected as insufficient by the Palestinians, setting the stage for the breakdown of peace negotiations later that month after Mr. Netanyahu ordered construction to begin on a new Jewish settlement project in Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arab east Jerusalem.

The Palestinians said the second redeployment should take place by this Sunday, just six months after the first, but Israel has rejected this.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

- 14:10 Twinkle
- 14:30 Muppet Show
- 15:00 Blue Healers
- 15:30 World Of Geo
- 16:00 The Valley Between
- 16:30 Tili
- 17:00 French programmes
- 19:00 Le Journal
- 19:30 News headlines
- 19:35 Neighbours
- 20:00 The Newly Weds
- 20:30 Prism
- 21:10 Time Trax
- 22:00 News in English
- 22:30 Feature film
- 23:59 End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

- 04:49 Fajr
- 06:09 (Sunrise) Duha
- 12:34 Dhur
- 16:08 'Asr
- 18:59 Maghreh
- 20:19 'Isha

CHURCHES

- St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifiah, Tel. 810740
- Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
- St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
- Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
- De la Salle Church Tel. 661656
- Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
- Church of the Annunciation

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Amman International Church Tel. 5516245

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

It will be relatively warm with

temperatures higher than average by 2-3 degrees centigrade

and winds nonwesterly moderate.

In Aqaba, it will be hot.

winds northerly moderate, and

seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 20/34

Aqaba 24/39

Deserts 17/57

Jordan Valley 25/40

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 34 Aqaba 37 Humidity

readings: Amman 30 per cent,

Aqaba 40 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Isam Al Asmar 890504

Dr. Yousef Nasser 751144

Dr. Khaloud Klob 816715

Dr. Nidal As'ad 751672

Firas pharmacy 661912

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asama pharmacy 637055

Naioukh pharmacy 623673

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir 276852

Al Quds pharmacy (-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Nabil Saffarini 901323

Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192 621111,

637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-

53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-

53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6

Akdeh Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26

Army, Marka 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikam Modern Hospital

(09)990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272727

Don Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

Queen Noor, Prince Hamzeh to attend Princess Diana's funeral

AMMAN (J.T.) — At the request of His Majesty King Hussein, Her Majesty Queen Noor and HRH Prince Hamzeh will attend the funeral of the late Princess of Wales today.

They will convey the condolences of His Majesty and their family in Jordan to the royal family and members of the Spencer family on the sad occasion of Princess Diana's death.

Ministry of Education approves Christian syllabus

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Education Council of the Ministry of Education has endorsed a Christian syllabus for Christian students in government schools, according to a statement by Minister of Education and Higher Education Munther Masri reported in Al Arab Al Yawm daily.

The minister was quoted as saying that the council Wednesday approved a syllabus taught at government schools in Syria and was earlier approved by the Christian denominations here, adding that the ministry has since 1980 approved of the Christian education plan.

Crown Prince Hassan returns after official visits to Russia, Czech Republic

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan returned to Amman Thursday evening following visits to Russia and the Czech Republic, where he discussed bilateral relations and issues of common concern.

An official spokesman said Crown Prince Hassan's visits to the two countries were successful on all counts, adding that the peace process and trade relations between Jordan and the two countries were on the agenda. In Moscow, Prince Hassan received an honorary

doctorate from the Moscow Institute for International Relations in recognition of his efforts towards world peace and stability.

In his address to the Forum-2000 held in Prague, Prince Hassan called for the creation of a system to govern humanitarian relations and contribute to cooperation and interaction among various cultures.

Islam, along with the other monotheistic religions, provides the principles on which such a system could be founded, he said.

He also urged the Western world to end misconceptions of Islam as a source of danger, stressing that Islam is a religion that advocates tolerance and calls for openness to the world.

Crown Prince Hassan was accompanied on the visits by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Rashid and Princess Badia as well as Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Anani.

King Hussein to honour former chamber of commerce members

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein today is scheduled to honour former heads and members of the Amman Chamber of Commerce during a special ceremony at the Royal Cultural Centre.

King Hussein is expected to present the group with the Amman Chamber's shield in recognition of their efforts in serving the economy, according to a statement by the Amman Chamber of Commerce published in the local press Friday.

The statement said Haidar Murad, the chamber's current president, will deliver an address at the meeting, where 35 members will be honoured along with Hamdi Tabbah, the former president.

Mr. Murad said the ceremony is an important step in expressing appreciation of the former members' efforts, who laid the foundation of the Kingdom's trade and economic activities in the past decades. The commercial sector has witnessed major developments over the past decades, and now at least 30,000 businesses and trading companies are members of the Amman Chamber, he said in the statement.

Paying tribute to King Hussein's directives that helped promote the national economy, Mr. Murad said the commercial sector was instrumental in providing the local markets with their needs and helped bolster other sectors such as tourism, banks, hotels, and transport. The Amman Chamber of Commerce has been governed by 20 boards of directors since its establishment in 1923.

Number of professional women in media continues to grow, despite obstacles

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Women in the media, inspired by a handful of daring and successful pioneers who started breaking ground around 15 years ago, have gradually increased their ranks and refined their weapons.

"When I started 12 years ago, there were only two women covering political issues, both for the English press: Rana and Lamis," recalled Nermeen Murad, former Jordan Times reporter and editor, and Amman bureau chief for the Italian news agency ANSA.

Rana Subbagh, former Reuters correspondent, and Lamis Andoni, currently a Boston-based independent journalist contributing to Middle East International and other prestigious international publications, "paved the way for the new generations of professional female reporters," Ms. Murad said.

Though there had been earlier women journalists, such as Samira Kassar, covering mainly social issues, "the years between 1985 and 1988 marked a shift in the official attitude towards women journalists, and [the change] extended to civil society," Ms. Murad continued.

More women started to approach the journalistic profession in those years due to a number of coincidental developments.

"There were more newsworthy political events, such as the resumption of parliamentary life and the deterioration of the situation in occupied Palestine," she said.

Also, the appointment of Leila Sharaf as minister of information, from 1984 to 1985, contributed to the change of attitude towards women in the media.

"Gradually, women reporters started being invited to press conferences and were assigned more and more important political stories," she continued.

Today, the number of women members in the Jordan Press Association (JPA) accounts for more than 15 per cent of total members, (62 women out of 390 members).

However, when compared to other Arab countries, specifically Egypt, this percentage is still low.

According to Awatef Abdul Rahman, professor of journalism at the Faculty of Mass Communications at Cairo University and previously a writer at the prominent Egyptian daily Al-Ahram, women journalists in Egypt account for more than one fourth of the total number of journalists.

However, as far as the Kingdom is concerned, women's membership in the JPA is still one of the highest in Jordanian professional associations.

In the Jordan Bar Association (JBA), for example, female lawyers still account for only nine per cent of the total members (376 practising women lawyers, out of 3,370 practising lawyers overall).

Some, including men, explain the relatively high number of women in journalism by the fact that women are simply better than their male colleagues at the job.

"Though I do not like to make gender differentiation, I personally find that female reporters are generally more reliable than men," said opposition and Islamist leader Leith Shbeilat.

"As a matter of fact, some of them are more professional, have a deeper sense of duty, and seek the truth more tenaciously than men, because they are more motivated and feel they have to prove themselves," Mr. Shbeilat added.

Ms. Murad, who has been "in business" for 12 years, asserts that women tend to be more professional because they "follow the official channels."

"A female journalist would contact the person she intends to interview, and ask for a formal meeting, while men tend to see journalism as a social function: They rely on mansef

to meet the person they want to speak to, and then take him aside during the gathering and have a chat, without taking notes or conducting a real interview," she explained.

Economic aspects are also cited as causes for the relatively high number of females in media professions.

"The main reason for the high number of women in journalism is financial: jobs in journalism pay less than other jobs which one could obtain with the same qualifications," Ms. Murad said.

She noted that "guys hung out in newspapers or TV stations for a few years, just as long as they need to gain some experience and find some other, better paid job."

Financial matters are always closely related to social factors: A common denominator of most Jordanian women working in the media seems to be that, with a few exceptions, they come from upper or middle-class families.

"This is a very important factor, since it means that they do not have to financially support their families," noted Ms. Andoni.

A high social status favours women journalists in two respects: first, thanks to a higher level of education, women journalists can take advantage of all opportunities in English or international publications or news agencies; second, thanks to their family connections, they can also have easier access to news sources, especially government officials, Ms. Andoni maintained.

Nevertheless, "the media remains a male-dominated world," she asserted, in which "it is often assumed that a male writer is better than a female reporter - or at least more intellectually sound."

Traditional social and familial responsibilities are also barring the advancement of women through all steps of their careers in the media.

Dr. Abdul Rahman pointed out that "women do not

have the same chances of benefiting from training as men do, due to the responsibilities they have towards their households and their children.

"All over the Arab World, studies also reveal that women journalists need more training," she said.

Therefore, "women journalists are working mainly as reporters, and very few reach higher positions," she said, adding that "when female reporters are promoted to higher positions, that happens in women's magazines mainly."

Traveling to cover events abroad or attend training programmes is always much more difficult for women journalists than for their male colleagues, either because of the conservatism of their parents or because of their commitments to their children.

Randa Habib, bureau chief for Agence France Presse (AFP) and correspondent for Radio Monte Carlo, said she was able to reconcile her family obligations with her professional life, but admitted that not all her female colleagues were equally lucky.

Ms. Habib took over as AFP Amman bureau chief when her second child was two-months old. "It is a double responsibility: Not only did I have to take care of the children, the house, the guests, and all related social obligations, but I also had to prove myself as a professional," she recalled.

Working for a foreign agency, Ms. Habib is expected "to file the story immediately, whenever anything happens, no matter if it is in the middle of the night or while you are receiving 30 people for a dinner party or on your son's birthday."

But, in a short while, "everybody realised that a woman can do exactly what men do, and my family is now proud of me," Ms. Habib concluded with satisfaction.

Communication conference to open today

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Institute of Diplomacy, in cooperation with the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at Yarmouk University and the Arab-U.S. Association of Communication Education (AUSACE), on Sept. 6 will open a three-day conference on "Communication and Diplomacy: New Horizons in the Information Age."

Deputising for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Jordan Institute of Diplomacy, the Upper House of Parliament Speaker Zeid Rifal will officially open the conference.

AUSACE president Dr. Issam Mousa, a communications professor at Yarmouk University, recently said organisers of the event are expecting 50-60 participants, from Jordan, the U.S., and the Arab World, to present papers in four categories:

international communication and the new world order, press and expression (law and regulation), media challenges in the coming century, and communication and public diplomacy.

Other themes include: use of new technologies in teaching and training; student internships in the professional media; university professional media; Arab-U.S. faculty exchanges; research in communications; problems in develop-

ing textbooks and classroom materials; and the history and philosophy of communication.

During the conference, AUSACE and the International Centre for Media at Georgia State University (GSU) will host a half-day, specialised professional workshop for senior Arab print and broadcast journalists on "International Affairs Coverage."

The workshop will be the first in a series of four workshops, hosted by AUSACE in conjunction with GSU and Al-Ahram Regional Press Institute, designed to assist the professional development of senior journalists in the Middle East and North Africa who concentrate

their reporting on topics such as health, environmental reporting, and other areas of public concern.

The conference will also address questions of professional ethics.

The workshop series is funded by the United States Agency for International Development and GSU's International Centre for Media Research and Professional Education, and will be hosted in Amman, Cairo, Tunis, Washington D.C., and Atlanta, Georgia.

AUSACE was founded in 1995. Its objective is to develop exchange among Arab and American communication educators and media professionals.

French electrical group to assist in reducing power station emissions

AMMAN (J.T.) — France's seven-member electricity group known as E7 Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding pledging to assist Jordan in reducing the emission of gases and other pollutants at the Kingdom's thermal power stations.

The agreement provides for the French group to take measures at Al Hussein Thermal Power Station in Zarqa and the Aqaba Thermal Power station to curtail the emission of carbon dioxide, which has been causing a great deal of damage to the environment, according to the National Electric Power Company (NEPCO) Director General Mohammad Said Arafah.

Under the terms of this pilot-phase project, the parties will establish a general work programme to promote energy-efficient thermal power generation while reducing gas emissions, in accordance with the prevailing regulations, he said.

The E7 group will provide NEPCO with services including training and other instructional activities for upgrading the skills of NEPCO personnel, in addition to providing E7 experts for the programme, he continued.

The E7 will also supply the necessary test equipment required for collaborative activities directly related to the select-



Acting Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning Salim Ghawi signs an agreement with a representative of a French electrical group to reduce emissions from several thermal plants (Petra photo)

ed recommendations to be implemented under this project, he added.

The accord provides for the French group to conduct a study on improving the efficiency of the thermal power stations prior to submitting recommendations on the steps to be taken to raise their productivity, Mr. Arafah said.

These measures are designed to decrease the thermal stations' fuel consumption and drastically reduce the poisonous gas emissions, he said.

The memorandum falls within the framework of an international agreement, signed by Jordan in 1995, pledging to adopt measures to reduce gas emissions to a minimum, Mr. Arafah concluded.

The result of the pilot phase project will be reported to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The memorandum was signed for Jordan by Mr. Arafah and Salim Ghawi, acting Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning, along with a representative of the French group.

WHAT'S GOING ON

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER '97 FESTIVAL

* Graphics by Rafa Nasiri of Iraq, Ziad Dalloul of Syria, and Najia Mehadiji at the South Hall.

* Paintings by Jordanian artist Mohammad Qaloka at the Middle Hall.

* Sculpture, drawings, and paintings by Jordanian artist Rajwa Ali.

* Works by contemporary Arab artists at the Blue House.

* Paintings by children of Zarqa reflecting on the problem of pollution at the Byzantine church.

FILM

* Video film — "Le Voyage au Bout du Monde" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, at 8:30 p.m.

PLAY

* Children's play — "The Treasure" at the Royal Cultural Centre, at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Paintings by Palestinian artists entitled "Palestine the Reality and the Dream" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until Oct. 2 (except Tuesdays).

* Display of caricature drawings by Naji Al Ali at Abdul Hameed Showman Foundation, Jabal Amman, until Sept. 6.

* Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Sept. 9.

* Works by Basem Al Mahdi at the Jordan Plastic Art Association Gallery, Jabal Weibdeh, until Sept. 8.

* ArtZaman and Bani Hamida present a Bani Hamida exhibition (rugs, cushions, runners, wall hangings and baskets) at the Al Baidar Hall of Kan Zaman, until Sept. 20.

Welfare association to establish Palestinian NGO assistance programme using grant money

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Welfare Association for Palestinian Development, which was awarded a \$10 million grant by the World Bank in July, is currently establishing a Project Management Organisation (PMO) in order to manage World Bank assistance to Palestinian non-governmental organisations (NGOs), said Director General of the Welfare Association Victor Kashkoush.

A total of \$14.85 million, including the World Bank grant, \$2.5 million from a Saudi fund, \$2.05 million from the Italian government, and \$0.3 million from the Welfare Association, will be distributed to various NGOs operating in this field, with a focus on the sustainable development of NGO capability to provide quality service to civil society, Mr. Kashkoush told the Jordan Times.

According to the director, technical assistance will target the needs of NGOs through a consultative process of needs analysis with three main goals.

Delivering services to the poor and marginalised sectors of Palestinian society through NGOs is the first objective, he said.

"Another objective is to improve the institutional capacities of NGOs receiving grants under the project," he said.

The support of Palestinian National Authority (PNA) efforts and the Palestinian

NGO sector and strengthening their working relationship, including assisting in the development of a positive legal framework, is the third goal, he elaborated.

He explained that for the past two years, the World Bank had noticed a major decline in Palestinian NGO financial assistance and consequently studied the circumstances under which these NGOs were operating.

The bank's study indicated that there was dire need to support these organisations in their services to the Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem, Mr. Kashkoush noted.

In 1993, the Welfare Association adopted a strategy concentrating on three tracks, he remarked. The first dealt with human

resource development, suessing vocational and technical training in areas such as the early childhood field, he said.

The second track relates to NGO capacity building, and the third to the promotion of culture and identity in Palestine, he explained.

These projects have covered all of "historical Palestine and the Palestinian communities in Lebanon," he said.

The association receives funds from foreign donors such as the European Union and the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development (AFSED), he continued.

"The association has been acting as an intermediary NGO since 1984," said Mr. Kashkoush, explaining that

the association had distributed 1,200 grants to over 300 NGOs in the West Bank, Gaza, the Palestinian communities in Israel and Lebanon, and some NGOs in Jordan and Kuwait.

This grant marks the first time the World Bank has awarded money to an NGO while simultaneously making the manager, he said.

The success of the PMO pilot project "will encourage the World Bank to expand into other countries to extend similar support," Mr. Kashkoush stressed.

"The Palestinian people's opportunities for promoting broad-based growth depends on how educated and healthy they are to make this possible," he concluded.

U.N. envoy warns of aid agencies' withdrawal from Afghanistan

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A special envoy of the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan here Friday warned that international aid agencies will pull out of Afghanistan if the war there continues.

Gustave Speth, chief of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), said the reconstruction of Afghanistan could begin only after the ongoing conflict between the Taliban and rival Afghan groups concluded.

"The country is sliding steadily towards the bottom of any index you look at, and under current conditions the U.N. was not in a position to offer any major developmental programme," Mr. Speth told a group of reporters.

"If the situation does not improve, then very many international agencies will have to move out," said Mr. Speth, who heads a special U.N. agency set up by Kofi Annan for the implementation of his July 16 reforms package.

Mr. Speth, who is negotiating with the Taliban on a U.N. project in Afghanistan, did not specify whether it would be UNDP or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which will pull out if the war did not end.

"We are trying to sustain livelihood in some areas and the people will suffer more if we are not there," he told reporters.

Mr. Speth said problems of the civilian population were increasing because of the prolonged conflict and said reconstruction of Afghanistan would be a costly affair for the international community.

"But reconstruction can only begin after the war stops," Speaking on his talks with the militia, Mr. Speth said the U.N. was waiting for a response on proposals to set up some 20 foreign-funded schools for girls and boys in Taliban-controlled territories.

The fundamentalist militia prohibits education for women.

"Name a problem and Afghanistan has it," Mr. Speth said, adding the U.N. was also in touch with the Islamic militia in control of Kabul for cooperation in projects such as drinking water, health and education.

The U.N., ICRC and a few other aid agencies are present in Afghanistan, where the Taliban and troops loyal to ousted President Burhanuddin Rabbani have been locked in combat since September 1996 when the Islamic militia seized power over two-thirds of the country.

Tens of thousands have died in the fighting, which is yet another phase of a war that first began when Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan in 1979.

Mr. Speth arrived here Thursday for talks with Indian leaders on the U.N. secretary general's reforms package which aims at preparing the 185-state world body to face the 21st century.

Meanwhile yesterday, heavy fighting has erupted in the Ghorband Valley where an isolated pocket of pro-Taliban

residents are holding out against rival Afghan groups, state-run Radio Shariat reported Thursday.

The report said repeated attacks by ex-government commander Ahmad Shah Masood and his Shiite allies had failed to break the pro-Taliban enclave, situated around 40 kilometres from Taliban lines north of Kabul.

"Several failed assaults of the Masood-Khalili headed militia were repulsed by the Islamic army troops in Ghorband during the past three days," the Taliban mouthpiece said.

Mr. Khalili heads the Shiite Hezb-e-Wahdat faction allied with Mr. Masood in an anti-Taliban alliance which also includes northern warlord Abdul Malik.

"The Islamic troops inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and forced them to escape to the mountains," the report added, claiming six anti-Taliban fighters were killed.

Travellers arriving here from the Ghorband valley have confirmed a sizeable pocket of Taliban support remains in the valley, even though there are no hard-core militia fighters based in the area.

"Most of the Taliban have gone and it is only locals fighting but they are short of ammunition," traveller, Najib Ahmad reported.

The narrow Ghorband Valley runs west from the plains north of Kabul to the central Afghan Shiite stronghold of Bamian, and was a launchpad for Taliban attempts to advance north earlier this year.

Following several months in the hands of the militia, locals said the entire valley fell back into opposition hands when the Taliban were beaten back to within 25 kilometres of Kabul seven weeks ago.

But within days locals revolted against the Shiite Hezb-e-Wahdat faction, claiming to have fallen victim to reprisals and atrocities.

"When the Taliban left most of the valley came under the control of Hezb-e-Wahdat, but they looted and took away young boys and girls for their entertainment," Ghorband resident, Ghulam Rasul told AFP.

The farmer, who had just completed a three day walk to Kabul, said locals had maintained their support for the Taliban given their record of establishing security.

"All we want is security from the commanders, and to be able to harvest our wheat and fruit," Mr. Rasul explained.

At least 12 other Ghorband residents recounted similar reports of Hezb-e-Wahdat abuses, including rape, buggery, looting and indiscriminate killings of civilians.

The Ghorband pocket is the second enclave of Taliban support within the anti-Taliban alliance-held northern two-thirds of Afghanistan.

Also in the hands of the militia is Kunduz province, which borders Tajikistan, held by Taliban fighters and local supporters.

Italian tourist killed in round of hotel blasts in Havana

HAVANA (AFP) — An Italian tourist died as blasts rocked three hotels in Havana's posh Miramar district, hotel employees, witnesses and police said.

Fabio Di Celmo, 32, a Genoa-born Italian national living in Montreal, Canada, was identified by the Italian Foreign Ministry as the tourist who died in an explosion near the ground floor bar at the Copacabana hotel around midday Thursday.

He had been staying at the hotel with his father.

The death of Di Celmo, said an Interior Ministry statement carried by Prensa Latina news agency late Thursday, "is part of the terrorist activities organised, supplied and carried out from the United States." The explosion blew out a glass window and bent its metal frame. Glass splinters and a large pool of blood could be seen on the floor.

Di Celmo "was dead. I saw him. I witnessed it," a tearful and visibly shaken Copacabana employee told AFP at the scene.

"He had no signs of life when they took him to the hospital," said an Italian tourist.

The hotel manager told AFP one employee was injured in the blast.

Fifteen minutes after the Copacabana blast, another explosion hit the nearby Chateau hotel. A policeman who hopped access to a third hotel, the Triton hotel, confirmed an explosion had also gone off there but said there were no injuries.

The Interior Ministry blamed the bombings on "Professional assassins lacking any scruples," adding that the Cuban government would "take all necessary measures against these cowardly and repugnant attacks."

The intensity of the blasts and the fact they occurred in hotels used by foreigners in the middle of the day, signal an intent to kill — and raise questions about the security of the more than one million tourists a year on the tightly policed Caribbean island, observers said.

The observers also noted that the timing of the blasts — 15 minutes apart — point to a well-organised team who also appeared to be well-informed about security measures imposed in hotels following earlier explosions.

The blasts came almost one month after a bomb went off August 5 in the lobby of Havana's Melia Cohiba hotel, following a

pair of almost simultaneous blasts July 12 at the landmark El Nacional and Capri hotels in Havana that left three people with minor injuries.

Raul Castro, head of Cuba's defence forces and brother of longtime President Fidel Castro, at the time accused Washington of "continuing its dirty war against Cuba."

The government has suggested U.S.-based foes of Castro's rule are carrying out a campaign to undermine the tourism industry which has grown at breakneck pace to become the Cuban economy's mainstay.

It has pushed past sugar cane to become the country's top source of foreign currency, recently growing at a frenzied 20 per cent a year. It hauled in \$1.3 billion in 1996 for a net profit of \$450 million. Official projections for 1997 are \$1.75 billion in sales.

In their statement late Thursday, Cuban officials said "the latest bombings are targeting one of the chief economic sectors of the country, which corresponds to enemy interests seeking to strangle our economy by any means, in order to destroy the (Cuban) revolution."

whether they are stored or stolen. I don't know," Mr. Lebed said.

Mr. Uvatenko said there was no chance that the nuclear devices could be stored without being properly registered or had been used or destroyed and not accounted for.

Mr. Lebed speculated that the missing weapons could be "somewhere in Georgia, somewhere in Ukraine, or somewhere in the Baltic countries. Maybe outside those countries."

Nuclear experts with international think-tanks have said in the past Russia had strict control over its military nuclear sites, and said they viewed nuclear bomb and missile theft as extremely unlikely.

But they have said there have been cases of theft of nuclear materials from power plants and scientific laboratories.

"I don't know whether they have been destroyed or

Mir crew gear up for spacewalk

MOSCOW (AFP) — Mir's Russian-American crew rested up Friday ahead of a long-awaited spacewalk to locate a hole in the space station's Spektr science module, damaged in a near-catastrophic collision in June.

"They are resting today. They have no tasks set," ground control spokesman Valery Lyndin told AFP.

Later in the day, the crew were to catch a hook-up to a concert by world famous opera diva, Montserrat Caballe, being given in Moscow to mark the capital's 850th anniversary celebrations this weekend.

Mir Commander Anatoly Solovyov and NASA astronaut, Michael Foale will leave the station at 4:55 a.m. Saturday in cumbersome white spacesuits and helmets to seek the puncture in Spektr's hull.

Their spacewalk is expected to end at 10:35 a.m. NASA said a practice run in spacesuits earlier this week went smoothly.

The damage to Spektr was caused when an out-of-control cargo ship slammed into it during a docking manoeuvre on June 25, depressing the module and forcing the crew at that time to seal it off.

On Aug. 22, Mr. Solovyov and the third crew member Pavel Vinogradov became the first people to go into Spektr since the accident and successfully restored power which had plunged on board when the module was isolated.

But the puncture, believed to be about the size of a postage stamp, must still be found so that the crew can later repair it and reopen Spektr for the scientific experiments financed by NASA and the European Space Agency, providing money badly needed by their cash-strapped Russian counterparts.

Mr. Foale, who has lived through an unprecedented string of malfunctions and accidents on Mir since he arrived in May, got NASA's green light Thursday to go on the spacewalk.

"After a full and extensive review ... we are sure that this mission can be safely executed," Frank Culbertson, NASA's shuttle-Mir programme director said.



Russian President Boris Yeltsin (right) and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexiy II (centre) walk along Stoleshnikov lane during a ceremony to open a new pedestrian zone in the downtown Russian capital Saturday. This ceremony is a part of festivities celebrating Moscow's 850 anniversary (Reuter photo)

Yeltsin praises Moscow mayor on city's anniversary

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin congratulated Moscow on its 850th anniversary Friday, calling the capital the cradle of Russian democracy and praising its Mayor Yuri Luzhkov as the country's best.

Mr. Yeltsin, in an address on Radio Russia, said Moscow was where "the first groups of democrats, who achieved the incredible, collected."

Mr. Yeltsin also thanked the city of about nine million people for its support when he faced down a power grab by Soviet hardliners in 1991 and during his reelection bid in 1996, when he won 77 per cent of the Moscow vote.

He said Mr. Luzhkov, who is widely cited as a heavyweight contender to replace Mr. Yeltsin in the 2000 elections, works "harder and more energetically than many youngsters. In terms of experience of city management, he probably has no equal."

Mr. Yeltsin praised Mr.

Luzhkov's building projects, including the reconstruction of a cathedral on the Moscow River that was destroyed by Stalin and a massive World War II memorial. "This is the spiritual centre of Russia," Mr. Yeltsin said.

He joked that a sign of Mr. Luzhkov's success is that he has been portrayed along with the rest of the country's main political figures in the satirical puppet programme Kukly. "You have to value that kind of popularity," he said.

Festivities celebrating the city's anniversary begin Friday and go on all weekend.

Mr. Luzhkov, whose grand projects have transformed Moscow in time for the city's 850th anniversary, is determined to brighten up Muscovites' lives, literally — by dispersing the wintry clouds over the city as the festivities get underway.

Eight planes and two helicopters were ready to start their cloud-busting operation Friday, armed with

hundreds of canisters of silver iodide, whose structure resembles the ice crystals found in clouds.

The aircraft will spend hours seeding the clouds with the chemical, which delays the formation of rain droplets. The aim is to push the rain out to the suburbs of Moscow and away from the centre, where Mr. Luzhkov will head a parade Saturday, said Gennady Beryulev, the meteorologist who will coordinate the operation all weekend.

Other reagents, containing solid carbon dioxide or liquid nitrogen, can be used to create bright patches in an overcast sky.

All the chemicals used are environmentally safe, according to Russian meteorologists, who have years of experience in such techniques.

Flight controllers at Moscow's airports were alerted about the operation to pierce the unseasonably dense blanket of cloud that settled over Moscow this week.

Moscow has been gearing up for months for the 850th birthday celebrations.

They will be kicked off with a gala concert Friday evening on Red Square, starting Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti, followed by the parade and a spectacular laser show Saturday by French pop star Jean-Michel Jarre.

The cloud-busting operation is expected to cost nearly \$500,000.

"That is a tiny amount compared with the total budget for the festivities, especially if you consider how badly they would be affected if the aircraft were not used," said Valery Dyachenko, deputy director of RosGidroTsent, the Russian national weather service.

The last time Moscow splashed out on the cloud-busters was in 1995, for the 50th anniversary of the allied victory in World War II — an event attended by numerous world leaders.

Government forces retreat from Comoran Island

MORONI (R) — A Comoros Red Crescent official said Friday secessionist forces had driven government troops out of the Anjouan capital Mutsamudu after fighting overnight which has killed and wounded many people.

The official, who declined to be named, spoke from the nearby island of Moheli a day after the government of President Mohammad Taki claimed it had Anjouan under its control.

He said government troops who invaded Anjouan Wednesday had retreated to the airport at Ouani seven kilometres east of Mutsamudu from where they were still able to shell secessionist forces.

"Government forces have retreated from Mutsamudu," the Red Crescent official told Reuters.

He said his information was based on radio contacts with aid workers on Anjouan. Mr. Taki's government has cut direct telephone links to Anjouan and censored news about the fighting on Comoran state radio.

The Red Crescent official added: "Mutsamudu is under control of secessionist forces but the government is able to shell the town from the airport."

He said many people had died in the latest fighting sparked by government attempts Wednesday to crush the secessionist revolt.

The official said many houses and buildings had also been destroyed in the fighting which has also prevented medical aid from reaching the wounded.

But Mr. Taki's government maintained Friday it was still in control of Anjouan and that its forces were on the island "carrying out their duties with dignity and caution." It claimed secessionist leaders had fled Mutsamudu.

A statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs accused the secessionists of using women and children as shields.

Anjouan, the second largest of a three-island archipelago, seceded on Aug. 3 after months of protest, civil unrest and clashes with security forces that led to several deaths. Moheli, the smallest island, followed suit.

Mr. Taki's government launched an assault on Anjouan Island early Wednesday to crush the revolt. The

troops attacked Domoni town and the airport at Ouani before moving towards the capital, witnesses said.

On Thursday, the Comoros government claimed its forces recaptured all strategic points on Anjouan.

In Paris, a senior French military officer, also declining to be quoted by name, described the fighting on Anjouan Thursday as "low-key" and involving a few hundred fighters armed with light weapons.

Political leaders on Anjouan and the other secessionist island of Moheli have disagreed on whether they want full independence, a return to French rule or merely greater autonomy.

U.S. warns Bosnian Serbs elections will go ahead

BRUSSELS (AFP) — The United States Friday warned hardline Bosnian Serbs that next week's municipal elections would go ahead regardless of whether they went through with their threat of a boycott.

"If they (the Bosnian Serbs) do not want to participate, the elections will go ahead without them," Robert Gelbard, the U.S. envoy to Bosnia, told journalists at a breakfast here.

This stance had been strongly backed at a meeting of the International Contact Group on Bosnia here Thursday night, he added.

As he issued the warning, Mr. Gelbard urged the European Union to step up pressure on Yugoslav President Slobodan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb wartime leader who, according to the envoy, continues to a "major malign figure in the Republika Srpska."

Washington is growing increasingly concerned at

Mr. Milosevic's alignment with the hardliners in the Bosnian Serb parliament in their power struggle with the Republika Srpska's President Biljana Plavsic. Mr. Gelbard acknowledged.

"We are tremendously concerned by Milosevic's increasingly overt support for Pale," the envoy said ahead of meetings with EU officials and NATO ambassadors.

While singling out Mr. Milosevic, Mr. Gelbard also said Croatia was failing to meet its commitments as one of the guarantors of the 1995 Dayton peace accords.

"We feel Western Europe should take a very strong position to put pressure on the two guarantor countries that are not performing," Mr. Gelbard said.

"Neither Croatia nor the FRY (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) are playing the kind of role they should be," Supporters of Mr. Karadzic, who control the Bosnian Serb parliament in Pale, have threatened to boycott the elections in

protest at Western support for Ms. Plavsic, who dissolved the assembly in July.

Although Ms. Plavsic was close to Mr. Karadzic during the war, the United States is convinced that she is now committed to implementing Dayton, which seeks to create a united Bosnia on the basis of two semi-autonomous entities — the Serb Republic and a Muslim-Croat federation.

Mr. Gelbard said he believed Ms. Plavsic genuinely regretted her war-time record and had demonstrated her commitment to Dayton by actively working to promote the return of refugees to their homes, by attempting to control endemic corruption and encouraging openness in the media.

In contrast, the faction that controlled the parliament had no intention of making any progress towards a democratic, multi-ethnic Bosnia.

Their limited cooperation with the international community had been strictly confined to a narrow range

of issues where they felt they could directly benefit. "They have no intention of fully implementing Dayton," Mr. Gelbard said.

Meanwhile, U.S. peace-keeping troops have abandoned a guard post at a bridge in the north Bosnian Serb-controlled town of Brcko a week after coming under attack there by stone-throwing mobs. NATO said Thursday.

"I can confirm to you that SFOR no longer has a checkpoint at the south end of the Brcko Bridge," Lieutenant-Colonel Jim Cronin, a spokesman for the NATO-led peace Stabilisation Force (SFOR), told Reuters from the American base in Tuzla.

"It's going to free up our SFOR soldiers to conduct roving patrols throughout the Brcko area. So we will still have (control of) all security and we can go to the bridge," Col. Cronin said.

SFOR officers had been considering the move for some time prior to last week's melee, he said.



Black box found

A black box was found in the wreckage of a plane that crashed near Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on Friday.

The black box, which was found in the wreckage of the plane, was a valuable source of information about the crash.

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A rescue worker removes one of the 64 passengers killed after a Vietnam Airline flight from Ho Chi Minh City crashed near Phnom Penh's Pochentong Airport Wednesday (Reuters photo)

Black box found; 2nd Cambodia air crash survivor confirmed

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Aviation officials investigating the crash of a Viet-nam Airlines jet here recovered the second of three crucial flight data recorders Friday as the carrier confirmed that a second child had survived the catastrophe.

Cambodians observed a national day of mourning for the 64 victims of the crash with Second Prime Minister Hun Sen inaugurating a building at the Phnom Penh medical school funded by a South Korean team that perished in the crash. In Hanoi, Vietnam Airlines confirmed that four-year-old Vu Hung Thinh, being treated for serious head wounds and broken ribs at a Phnom Penh hospital, had been a passenger on the ill-fated flight.

The boy had been brought by villagers to a hospital other than the main Phnom Penh hospital and then

transferred twice. Previously, the only confirmed survivor had been an 18-month-old Thai boy who suffered a broken leg and minor head injuries. The death toll was dropped from 65 to 64.

Victims' relatives from South Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan, Hong Kong and China continued their task of identifying their loved ones at Phnom Penh's Calmette Hospital.

At the hospital, separate tents have been erected to cover the coffins of victims of each nationality.

The bodies of the plane's six-member Vietnamese crew were repatriated Friday.

At mid-afternoon, 41 South Koreans, many in tears, arrived from Seoul via Ho Chi Minh City to claim their family members' bodies at Calmette and prepare them for repatriation.

Investigators said the exact cause of the crash was

still unclear but preliminary work indicated that the Russian-built Tupelov TU-134 aircraft had missed its approach and crashed while trying to pull up for another landing attempt.

A full investigation is not expected to complete for at least several days as the contents of the "black boxes" — one of which was found shortly after the crash on Wednesday and the other recovered from villagers early Friday — needed to be analysed.

The villagers gave the black box to investigators after a nationwide appeal a day earlier for its return. Investigators said they had given the villagers \$200 as a reward.

The box was slightly damaged but it was not immediately determined if the damage affected its data. Still missing was a voice data recorder which contains tape of the pilot's conversa-

tion with his crew and the control tower which reported losing radio contact with the plane shortly before it crashed.

Flags flew at half-mast across the country in memory of the victims, including representatives of a South Korean university who had been travelling here for the inauguration of a medical school building they funded.

The dedication of the two-storey building went ahead as scheduled Friday led by Mr. Hun Sen who offered his condolences and led those attending in a minute of silence.

"The hands and lives which have helped to build this building have been lost but this achievement still stands," Mr. Hun Sen said. "All of us were very shocked for the loss."

The management of the airport took out advertisements in local newspapers offering their "sincere condolences and deepest sympathies" to the families of the victims.

Cambodian officials lamented the fact that widespread looting from the crash site and technical and equipment problems had hindered the investigation, but appealed for international assistance to prevent such problems from recurring.

"Our rescue teams need to be better equipped and trained," said a senior Foreign Ministry official.

"They did the best they could with what they have, but clearly it could have been done better."

Access to the crash site was limited because the two dirt trails leading to it were narrow, muddy and heavily rutted, preventing many emergency vehicles from getting all the way to the area.



Hospital staff at Phnom Penh's Calmette Hospital's makeshift morgue, receive another of the 64 passengers killed after a Vietnam Airline flight from Ho Chi Minh City crashed near Phnom Penh's Pochentong Airport Wednesday (Reuters photo)

S. Korean opposition seeks delay in election

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea's minor opposition party leader Friday called on President Kim Young-Sam to delay December's presidential election and change from a presidential to a parliamentary cabinet system.

"There is still time to change the constitution before President Kim Young-Sam's term ends," Kim Jong-Pil, presidential candidate for the United Liberal Democrats told reporters.

"If the people decide it is necessary, we can delay the

Dec. 18 presidential election," he said.

"If President Kim agrees to the parliamentary cabinet system and takes the lead in putting the issue to the public, we will cooperate and support him," he said.

The presidential race is a four-cornered one between Mr. Kim Jong-Pil, Kim Dae-Jung of the main National Congress for New Politics (NCNP), Lee Hoi-Chang of the ruling New Korea Party (NKP) and Cho Soon of another minor opposition group, the De-

mocratic Party (DP). There was no immediate official reaction to the call.

However President Kim and the ruling party have said there will be no constitutional change during his term in office.

Yonhap news agency quoted a Blue House official as saying that more time is needed to study the proposal, which he said was not a formal proposal.

The ruling party, whose candidate is losing popularity, has also hinted that the issue could be discussed.

"Even if there is a formal proposal, the issue is something that should be discussed within the party," the official was quoted by Yonhap as saying.

However, officials from the other two opposition camps reacted negatively to the proposal, Yonhap said.

"Talking about a change of the government system and election delays when the country is experiencing a difficult period will not help overcome the crisis," Mr. Cho Soon of the minor DP was quoted as saying.

Australian thieves steal gems from under guards' noses

SYDNEY (AFP) — "Gutsy" thieves spirited away 300,000 Australian dollars (\$221,000) worth of diamonds from under the noses of security guards at a jewellery fair here this week, embarrassed organisers said Friday.

The gems, which included rare Argyle pinks and yellows, were exhibited by West Australian-based diamond miner Argyle Diamonds at the annual trade fair organised by the Australian Jewellers' Association here.

They were in a container the size of a mobile phone which vanished without trace, baffling security staff who had made the Argyle Diamonds display the most secure of the exhibition.

Tony Meagher, a director of the organising company Expertise Events, said the diamonds were taken from "under the noses" of security cameras, a security guard and employees of Australia's only diamond miner.

"You'd have to be pretty good; pretty gutsy," Mr. Meagher said.

"There's plenty of security. Argyle itself had a security guard employed on their stand. They've been one of the most security-conscious companies we've ever had at the fair since we started in 1992."

"Argyle bring their goods in by armed vehicle, they take them out the same way and in between, there's a security guard always on their stand: you would think what more could you do?"

A spokesman for Argyle, Andrew Murray, said the gems, which were superior to the traditional white diamonds, were valued at 300,000 Australian dollars.

But he declined to comment on the circumstances of the disappearance or whether Argyle's security unit was conducting its own investigation.

Mr. Meagher said detectives in Sydney were investigating the Argyle theft plus a minor jewellery theft from a wholesaler's exhibit on Sunday.

U.N. releases scathing report on rights abuses in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — A senior United Nations official Friday released a scathing report documenting scores of human rights abuses in Cambodia following the ouster of co-premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh in July.

The 27-page report, with an appendix of 25 photographs, details "41 and possibly up to 60 politically motivated extra judicial executions since the military coup of 2-7 July, 1997."

In addition, the report says there is reliable evidence from witnesses that more than 60 other bodies, bearing signs of execution, were secretly brought to pagodas for immediate cremation in violation of religious customs and health requirements.

Thomas Hammarberg, the U.N.'s Special Representative for Human Rights in Cambodia, told reporters that the report had been submitted to government officials who had not taken issue with any of the information it contains.

"None of the ministers I met raised any problem with the accuracy or facts in the document," he told reporters at the Foreign Correspondents Club of Cambodia. "They all said it was important to investigate."

Mr. Hammarberg, met with King Norodom Sihanouk, newly appointed First Prime Minister Ung Huot, Second Prime Minister Hun Sen and Co-interior Minister Sar Kheng to discuss the report which meticulously documents cases of illegal detentions, executions and torture.

The release of the report follows harsh criticism of the U.N. Centre for Human Rights in Phnom Penh by Mr. Hun Sen who said the agency was guilty of spreading false information and intimidating many of Prince Ranariddh's supporters into fleeing the country.

Mr. Hun Sen, whose forces ousted the prince, demanded that the U.N. remove some of its staff from the office who he said were guilty of such offences.

Mr. Hammarberg said Mr. Hun Sen, who was among the senior officials he met with to discuss the report, apparently had dropped that demand and instead thanked the U.N. team for clearing up rumours that had been circulating.

"He said he found this report to be a serious investigation," Mr. Hammarberg said, adding that all the officials he spoke to said the government would launch a full investigation into the atrocities.

Mr. Hammarberg has appealed to the government to create two investigation committees to deal with the abuses — a formal criminal inquiry, and an independent commission with an international component to look at the overall rights situation in Cambodia.

However, the former secretary general of Amnesty International noted with concern that repeated previous

appeals for such investigations had been ignored and promises for them had not been kept.

"We are disappointed that previous assassinations ... in particular the (March 30 attack on an opposition) demonstration ... have not been investigated," Mr. Hammarberg said.

"None of the cases ... has been investigated as we want ... and this is a very serious failure."

He refused though to speculate whether the current appeal would have any effect, saying the government response to the report had been stronger than any other report he had presented.

Meanwhile Cambodia's co-prime ministers have thanked President Bill Clinton for ignoring political considerations at home and supporting their troubled country following the ouster of First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

The prince's replacement, Mr. Ung Huot, and Mr. Hun Sen thanked the president in particular for granting Cambodia special trading status even after the prince was deposed in July and the U.S. indefinitely suspended non-humanitarian aid to the country.

"We are particularly appreciative of your courage in standing up for the American-Cambodian relationship despite the fact that it might not be favourable to one's political stance," the premiers wrote in a Sept. 1 letter obtained Friday.

"However, your judgement was conscientiously right and we are personally very grateful (for it)."

Mr. Hun Sen effectively deposed Prince Ranariddh in fierce fighting in the capital over the July 5 and 6 weekend prompting an outcry in the U.S. especially among Republican members of Congress opposed to the president.

After aid was suspended — the executive branch, which Mr. Clinton heads — granted Cambodia trade status under the generalised system of preferences (GSP) which significantly reduces and, in some cases, eliminates import tariffs.

The State Department, which has described Prince Ranariddh's ouster as "undemocratic," defended GSP decision, saying the status would directly benefit the Cambodian people and not the government.

However, in their letter to Clinton, Ung Huot and Hun Sen said the granting of GSP "will now further strengthen and improve our commercial and diplomatic ties."

They added that they were glad trade relations between Cambodia and America continued to be good "notwithstanding our two countries' occasional political differences."

"Our poorest citizens have benefited greatly from the actions of your administration in fostering trade and other links between the two countries."

Indian group wants U.K. queen to apologise for 'atrocities'

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A militant Hindu group has asked Queen Elizabeth II, who is to visit India in October, to apologise for the "wrongs committed by the British" during the Raj. The Asian Age said Friday.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP, World Hindu Council) said it was opposed to the visit at a time when India was celebrating 50 years of independence from Britain.

"This is certainly not the year when the queen should visit India," the newspaper quoted VHP President Ashok Singhal as saying here.

"But if at all she does, she should apologise to the people in every corner of our country for the atrocities committed by the British" during their colonial rule of India.

Mr. Singhal, however, said the VHP would not organise street protests against the queen during the visit.

It was the second criticism of the queen's proposed trip in two days.

On Wednesday, an Indian nationalist group warned the queen not to visit India and accused her of trying to "bleed" New Delhi's economy.

The Azadi Bachao Andolan (Movement to Save Independence) group said the British monarch's intentions were similar to those of a predecessor of the same name.

"In 1600, during Queen Elizabeth I's regime, the East India Company laid the foundation of British imperialism in India. Queen Elizabeth II would like to see the new world order — the dream of white-ruled multinationalism firmly established (in India) by 2000," the group said.

B.L. Sharma, convenor of the group, said the queen should drop her visit to avoid "needless unpleasantness," and warned of "peaceful protests" if she were to come.

The proposed visit has already been hit by a row after Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral warned the queen not to visit the Indian city of Amritsar.

The British army shot dead 379 civilians at an Amritsar ground in 1919 during colonial rule.

Japan lawmaker's trip to disputed island blocked by coast guards

TOKYO (AFP) — A Japanese lawmaker and others failed in their attempt Friday to land on one of the Senkaku-Diaoyu Islands also claimed by China and Taiwan, with their voyage blocked by Japanese Coast Guards.

The trip, led by opposition lawmaker Shingo Nishimura, could have become a major embarrassment to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, who is visiting China to mark the 25th anniversary for normalised bilateral ties.

The 15-member group departed the port of Hirara on Miyako island, Okinawa prefecture, early in the morning, but was warned by a patrol boat of the Maritime Safety Agency they could not sail more than 20 nautical miles from the coast on their small pleasure boat, an agency official said.

The boat did not meet requirements in terms of its size and did not carry adequate equipment," the official added.

"It sailed around Miyako Island for about two hours and returned to the port at 8:25 a.m.," he said.

Mr. Nishimura, a member the main opposition New Frontier Party (NFP), told reporters after the aborted attempt that he was "ready to try again."

Last May, Mr. Nishimura drew protest from rival claimants China, Hong Kong and Taiwan by landing on Uotsuri, the biggest island in the uninhabited chain in the East China Sea.

The rocky islands, located

some 200 kilometres north-east of Taiwan and 160 kilometres north of Japan's Yaeyama Islands, are known as the Senkaku Islands in Japanese and Diaoyu in Chinese.

Mr. Nishimura disclosed the plan to land on Uotsuri for the second time late Thursday, saying that it was timed to coincide with Mr. Hashimoto's four-day visit to China until Sunday.

"It is natural for Japanese to go freely to Japanese territory. ... I would like Prime Minister Hashimoto, who is visiting China, to understand this territorial issue," Kyodo News quoted Mr. Nishimura as telling a news conference.

Others who joined Mr. Nishimura included former New Frontier Party lawmaker, Tadashi Kobayashi, a former Kumamoto prefectural assembly member and a current Tokyo assembly member.

The group had planned to land on the Uotsuri Island and to post a Japanese flag there, according to the lawmaker.

Meanwhile, a group of Japanese nationalists said Friday a lighthouse they erected in Kitakojima, another islet on the disputed chain, had "mysteriously disappeared."

"It has gone, although we don't know how it happened," an official of the Japan Youth Federation said in Tokyo.

The official said the group had dispatched its members to the Okinawan island of Ishigaki to "investigate the

disappearance of the lighthouse," but refrained from landing on the disputed island for the time being "out of consideration to Prime Minister Hashimoto's trip to China."

He said the members would land on the island after Mr. Hashimoto's trip. "We will re-erect the lighthouse there," the official said.

The group triggered waves of protest from Hong Kong and Taiwan when it built the lighthouse in July last year. In September, a leading activist on a Hong Kong protest boat drowned and died after the vessel was blocked by Japanese coast guards from landing on the disputed islands.

The Sankaku-Diaoyu dispute is one of the thorny issues marring Japan-China relations together with a security issue over Taiwan and Japan's wartime compensation.

In Beijing Thursday, Mr. Hashimoto reassured Chinese Premier Li Peng that Japan would not change its position that Taiwan was part of China in an apparent damage-control effort following recent remarks by Chief Cabinet Secretary Seiroku Kajiyama.

Mr. Kajiyama angered China by saying last month it was inevitable under U.S.-Japan defence guidelines that Japan would provide logistical support to U.S. forces in the event of a military clash between China and Taiwan.

Beijing has labelled such plans as gross interference in its internal affairs.

Hashimoto's party recaptures majority in powerful chamber

TOKYO (AFP) — Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) regained a majority in the all-powerful lower house for the first time in four years Friday as a former opposition member joined the party.

With the admission of Naoto Kitamura, a defector from the major opposition New Frontier Party, the number of LDP seats in the 500-seat chamber came to 251; party officials said.

The LDP had lost its majority in the 1993 elections, after dozens of members defected to form new parties.

Mr. Kitamura is the 12th

member who joined the ruling party since the latest general elections in October 1996. Most of the newly joined members were New Frontier Party defectors.

As the LDP fell short of winning a majority at 239 in the October elections, the party retained its alliance with two small parties — the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the New Party Sakigake.

LDP Secretary-General Koichi Kato told a news conference that his party would continue to "listen to what the SDP and the Sakigake have to say," ruling out a possibility of

seeking monopoly of the government for the immediate future.

While the LDP boosted its power in the lower house, the number of seats held by its rival New Frontier Party, led by former LDP power broker, Ichiro Ozawa, have dwindled to 133 from the 154 just after the elections.

Many defectors cited Mr. Ozawa's dominant leadership style as reason for their departure.

A bill is considered adopted if it is passed by the lower house even if the upper house does not endorse it.

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Editor-in-Chief: GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

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Facsimile: 696183

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Peace needs right conditions

THE SUICIDE bombings in a crowded street in West Jerusalem on Thursday and the failed Israeli operation in south Lebanon the following day are a grim reminder that all is not right in the search for peace in the Middle East. Whether they were timed to coincide with the visit of the U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to the region this week or not, the escalation is a symptom of the critical stage the process has reached at the moment. Deplorable as it is, violence reminds us that the euphoria of 1991 that accompanied the convening of the Madrid conference is now near dead. So far, the antagonists are blaming each other for the stalemate, both on the Palestine, Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Only belief in the rightness of the cause of peace, and hope that parties to the conflict would move away from apportioning blame on each other and into a concerted effort to cooperate to restart the stalled process, are capable of ending the current cycle of violence.

It might not be a bad idea to use Albright's visit to ease the tension and enhance security. But that should not obscure the fact that the real cause of violence is the stagnation of the talks on all fronts. Without disputing Israeli security concerns, Palestinians, Lebanese and Syrian grievances are genuine. The three parties accuse Israel of intending to dictate peace on its own terms and without exchanging land for peace in accordance with the Madrid framework and U.N. Security Council resolutions 247, 332, 425. That is why Israel's Arab interlocutors would want the U.S. to use its influence with Israel, as in fact happened before, to make it clear to the Israelis that indeed there can be no peace without security and no security without peace.

Whether the extremists in Palestine or Lebanon are getting a nod or not from Palestinian or Syrian officials, the message is the same. Israel cannot have it both ways: Security, peace and land together. The Netanyahu government, or whatever radical elements in the coalition, cannot change the rules of the game in the current peace effort. They cannot want peace for the Jewish people while they are coveting Arab lands, water and holding the Palestinian people and south Lebanon hostage to their security requirements. What Albright needs to do then is not just put pressure on the PNA to crack down on and destroy the infrastructure of Hamas and Islamic Jihad but also to get the Israeli premier and his cabinet to restate their country's commitment to total withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories and grant the Palestinian people their inalienable right to self-determination. Only through adopting such a policy can the Americans hope to push the cause of peace between Jews and Arabs forward.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily said that the tragic death of Princess Diana has raised the awareness of the Britons regarding the media which lives off cheap, sensational items, and aroused their anger over the loss of the princess in circumstances of the media's creation. Sultan Hamad said that the Jordanian public is also often angered by what is published in the weekly tabloids, like cheap and sensational or fabricated stories, and their anger was earlier expressed by the Lower House of Parliament's deputies, as well as manifested in the court rulings against some writers and publications. The yellow press in Britain had smeared the reputation of the late princess and was regrettably allowed to do that within the law which allows freedom of speech and freedom of the press, he noted. In our country, he said, the yellow press is exceeding all norms and going above all ceilings of freedom of expression and freedom of press, since they often smear the reputation of many people through fabricated and groundless reports. The writer said that the tragic death of Princess Diana should open the eyes of people about the danger of the yellow press and their sensational and unrealistic coverages which are bound to cause damage to society as a whole.

A WRITER for Al Arab Al Yawm discussed the status of private universities in Jordan, quoting figures of profits they made from the last academic year. The Applied Science University made JD 2.7 million profits, Jerash University, JD 768,000, Irbid University JD 147,000, said the writer, noting that such profits match those made by Jordanian banks. Operating on purely commercial basis, these universities, and others like them, must have reduced their input and operational costs in order to achieve profits, which means that they provide poor-level educational courses or offer low salaries to teachers in order to cut on expenses, according to Mohammad Subeih. He said that these universities have been raising their tuition fees without any control or direction from any official authority and perhaps have offered low salaries to the staff and did not give students a level of education on par with state-owned universities in a bid to reduce their expenses and increase their profits. If the private universities aim primarily at making profits, regardless of the standard of educational services, they must surely be acting in the manner of merchants and traders whose aim is to provide services or goods at the lowest possible cost and to maximise the profits from their transactions.

Jordanian Perspective

After developments in the region, American mediation 'never more timely and needed'

By Dr. Musa Keilani

THE BEN Yehuda terror attack in Jerusalem last Thursday is one more signal that an urgent effort is needed to save both Israelis and Arabs from the scorching fangs of reciprocal violence. An American mediation effort has never been more timely and urgently needed as it is now. It was a wise decision by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright not to postpone her planned Middle East trip due next week. Had the peace process been on rail, the Ben Yehuda victims, 7 dead and 192 injured, would have been still alive, enjoying a normal life with their families.

The stain of guilt cannot be exclusively put on the hands of the three suicide bombers; it hangs as heavily on the conscience of those whose settlement policy on Har Homa, Jahal Abu Ghneim, contributed to derailing the peace process.

Next week's Middle East tour by Albright definitely represents a new page in efforts to unblock the Middle East peace process since Zionist hardliners took over the helm in Israel in June last year. It is very clear that Albright, who has a wealth of diplomatic experience to her credit, would not have undertaken to come to the Middle East had there not been substantial hope that the logjam in Palestinian-Israeli peacemaking could be and would be lifted. Granted that Albright has gone on record applying pressure on the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to crack down on the so-called militants, rather than urging Israel to live up to its commitments. But there is little doubt that a new sense of understanding has dawned in Washington of the sheer illogic in pressuring the victims rather than the aggressor.

American troubleshooter Dennis Ross, long a target of charges of bias in favour of Israel while trying to mediate Israeli-Palestinian differences, has clearly sent indications of the change, albeit slow, in Washington's approach to the Middle East peace process. That is not to say that Albright, taking her cue from Ross, is coming to the region in a confrontational mood, ready to twist or even break Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's arm unless he gives in the legitimate demands of the Palestinian people.

However, recent statements from Americans, officials and politicians, underline two major elements. The first is that it has now dawned on the U.S. that Israeli Likudniks are trying their best to shift Israel away, as much as possible, from its commitments under the Oslo agreements and redraw the very principles on which the peace process was launched in Madrid in 1991. The second element is an increasing American realisation that the beneficiaries of the continued deadlock in peace moves and growing frustration among the Palestinians at large are none other than the very forces of extremism which Washington says it is trying to fight all over the world.

Notwithstanding the unreserved political, moral, military and diplomatic support that the U.S. has been extending to Israel, regardless of the gravity of any situation, Washington strategists seem to be thinking slightly different these days. They appear to have come to realise the truth that American economic and political interests rather than the "sanctity" of the U.S.-Israeli relationship stand to suffer if the present situation is left unchecked and if the

moderation of an Arab majority gives way to the extremism of a hardline minority.

The Arab success lies in nurturing the change in the American thinking and hammering home the message that, short-term developments apart, U.S. strategic interests could suffer a serious blow in the medium and long term if Washington becomes a party to forcing down Israeli-cooked solutions down the Palestinian and Arab throat.

The repercussions of extremism winning over moderation will not be limited to the immediate region either. We cannot ignore that the assumption of power by "moderates" in some parts of our region has not, officially or unofficially, it is these camps that the "militants" among us will turn to with increased fervour if the injustice that has been meted out to the Palestinians continues. The results of such an alliance would put out the lights on the American-orchestrated scenario that exists in some parts of our region and it could be too late for Washington to regret its pro-Israeli bias.

It is against the backdrop of hopes that Albright, who has sworn to defend "American interests" at whatever cost, is finally coming to terms with what those "interests" are that we in Jordan are optimistic that her Middle East mission could signal the light at the end of the tunnel.

Though the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) claimed responsibility for the Jerusalem explosions, the only real beneficiaries of that incident are the forces of darkness and the real enemies of the Palestinian people.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Rawabdeh, Shbeilat debate elicits strong reactions

REVIEWED BY ELIA NASRALLAH

LOCAL DAILIES last week tackled the debate which took place between Laith Shbeilat, the president of the Jordanian Engineers Association, and deputy Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, as well as violence in the occupied Arab territories, prospects of American mediation efforts, the death of Princess Diana, the situation in Algeria and domestic affairs.

A writer for Al Dstour attacked Mr. Shbeilat for defaming Jordan through the accusations he levelled at the Kingdom, saying that opposition to the government should not be displayed in a degrading manner, aimed at deceiving public opinion.

Salah Abu Zaid said that in his remarks, Mr. Shbeilat tried to insult the country and its leader in an impudent manner, in a way that would only secure for himself public contempt and disdain.

The writer quoted Mr. Shbeilat as describing the Kingdom as (Israeli Jordan) deprived of its Arab character, saying that such behaviour is considered an attempt to degrade the national dignity and the King and as something that would never help Mr. Shbeilat attain any personal glory.

In the view of Saleh Qallab, a writer for Al Arab Al Yawm, Laith Shbeilat was able through this debate on Al Jazira satellite television station to reassert his views and the ideas he is advocating to date are not his alone, but rather those of the public in general.

The writer said that the remarks of Mr. Rawabdeh and Mr. Shbeilat, who showed respect to each other during the confrontation, reflected the existence of a deep crisis at the political level in Jordan, and that attention should be focused on this crisis.

Hayel Du'ja, a writer for Al Dstour, paid tribute to Mr. Rawabdeh who, he said, displayed a true spirit of patriotism through his replies to Mr. Shbeilat's accusations and harsh words against the government and the country.

The writer said that as a patriot, Mr. Rawabdeh was quick and prompt in refuting accusations against Jordan because he felt indignant in the face of ingratitude and was determined to do justice to the Kingdom and its leadership in the face of all suspicions cast about Jordan's sacred national role.

The paper said that the explosions were the making of the enemies of peace who are trying to impose their agenda on the majority and who have resorted to violence to wreck the recent efforts which were close to achieving a breakthrough in the stalled peace process.

The paper expressed hope that the U.S. secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, who is visiting the region in the coming week, will not busy herself with questions related to coordination of security matters between the Israelis and the Palestinians but rather with helping the two sides find a lasting settlement which, the writer said, is the only guarantee to security.

Al Dstour daily echoed Al Ra'i's denunciation of the blasts which can ruin the revived efforts to give impetus to the peace process. While condemning the attacks on the civilians, the paper said that the blasts came as a result of the deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian lands and the despair which such situation has created in the hearts of the suicide bombers.

The paper said that the despair and the humiliation of the Palestinians, the starvation of the women and children and the continued demolishing of Arab houses were bound to lead to such results.

The paper said that the time has come for the Israelis to respond to calls of reason, and their repression and so prevent further acts of violence.

A writer for Al Arab Al Yawm discussed the coming visit to the Middle East by Ms. Albright, saying that all concerned parties are awaiting her visit with great hopes that she might give momentum to the peace process.

Salah Qallab said now that the Palestinians and the Israelis have resumed their coordination in security-related matters, Ms. Albright will have no excuse in not exercising sufficient pressure on the Israeli prime minister to implement the Oslo accords and take meaningful steps towards peace negotiations with Syria and Lebanon.

The writer said that Ms. Albright's task is of course very hard, but if she fails to exercise pressure on Benjamin Netanyahu and force him to end his government's illegal measures and aggressive policies, the region will remain simmering and the volcano will erupt once again in all forms of violence.

Yahya Mahmoud, a writer for Al Aswaq, criticised the spokesman for the U.S. secretary of state for stating that America's security is closely linked to that of Israel and the Middle East oil.

Coming just before the se-

retary's visit to the Middle East, such statement clearly indicates that Ms. Albright will focus her attention on security cooperation between the Palestinian National Authority and Israel and not on fundamental issues, which will be totally suiting the Israelis, said the writer.

It is not a novelty that the U.S. is concerned mainly with securing oil supplies and guaranteeing Israel's security, but having reaffirmed this fact just before Ms. Albright's tour of the region means that the secretary's visit is more routine than is not expected to help the two parties achieve a lasting settlement.

Mohammad Jaber Ibrahim, a writer for Al Arab Al Yawm, paid tribute to Princess Diana, saying that the princess who actually reigned as queen of hearts for millions of people will always be remembered for her good deeds.

The princess possessed an unusual power to influence the public and to draw people's attention to the need for extending help and showing sympathy towards the sick and the rejected members of the community, said the writer. Princess Diana was a unique person whose humanitarian feelings and charitable deeds attracted the attention of millions and won her worldwide respect, he added.

Zuleikha Abu Rishieh, a writer for Al Ra'i daily, said the tragic death of Princess Diana brought deep pain and sorrow to millions of people who admired her beauty, her charitable deeds and her humanitarian actions.

It is appalling to see the law in Britain allowing the media to chase people around, harassing them and making their lives miserable, said the writer. It is also to be noted that the media continue to focus attention on famous women and pursue such a behaviour regardless of the harm it causes while they tend to ignore or briefly cover up scandals of ministers or high-ranking officials who resign and vanish from public life.

The writer said that the Britons, who have been pained by Princess Diana's death, should struggle to introduce a law preventing the media from sneaking into or wrecking people's personal life.

Tareq Matarweh said that the British media were openly biased by focusing most attention on the death of Princess Diana and nearly completely ignoring the tragic death of her close friend Imad Al Fayed. The writer, who writes for Al Ra'i daily, said that Imad was not a playboy, as described by the British media, but rather a prominent

public figure in Britain and other countries and a personality that drew the princess to him.

The Western media has regrettably displayed racist behaviour in this case and seemed to have followed the same pattern of the majority of Zionist-influenced Western people's depiction of the Arabs and Muslims as terrorists or sensual persons.

The writer said that the wealthy Arabs who spend millions in Europe and the U.S. on their personal affairs have contributed to the distorted image of the Arab people.

Discussing the situation in Algeria, a writer for Al Dstour said that Abbas Madani, the Islamist leader in the embattled country, is to blame for the ongoing massacring of the innocent civilian people of Algeria.

Oreil Rintawi said that Mr. Madani's statement indicating unwillingness to issue an appeal to the criminal bands to stop playing the Algerian people reflects his keenness on exploiting the blood of women and children to achieve political ends.

His letter to the U.N. secretary general, in which he said he can stop the massacre but refrains from doing so, makes him an actual accessory to crime, said the writer. Regardless of the fact that he can or cannot really stop the violence, Mr. Madani's refraining from issuing an appeal to the criminals is tantamount to condoning their brutal actions.

The writer said there can be no justification for the acts of any person who can but does not take steps to end his people's misery.

A writer for Al Dstour reflected on the high cost of private school requirements, at the start of the 1997-98 school year, saying that the prices of most of these requirements rose by 30 per cent over last year's figures.

Munir Hamameh said that the tuition fees in private schools and private universities, in addition to the cost of transport and of shoes and clothing for children, also rose dramatically, making it very difficult, if not impossible, for the limited-income groups to cope with the situation.

Education should be a right of all people because it is an essential part of development, a fact that has been recognised at all local, regional and international conferences, said the writer.

Protection of children's right to education, he said, should be guaranteed by the state which can prevent education from becoming a commodity that merely ensures profits.

LETTERS

Refuting allegation

To the Editor:

IN REFERENCE to the article "First paper convicted under new press law" (Jordan Times, Sept. 4, 1997), I wish to clarify the following:

Al Bilad newspaper's lawyer claimed that the charges against that weekly were based on a news item run by Agency France-Presse, stating that Jordan had handed over to Israel the husband of Sonia Ra'i, a member of the Popular Front Liberation of Palestine, who was involved in a shooting incident at the crossing point between the Kingdom and the Palestinian territories.

I would like to stress that AFP did not carry such a story which was broadcast by the Public Israeli Radio. In fact, to the contrary, AFP filed on May 25, from Amman, remarks by Jordanian Minister of State for Information Samir Mutawi who refuted the Israeli report. AFP also filed from Jerusalem a confirmation that Israeli police arrested in the West Bank Sonia Ra'i's husband.

Furthermore, Al Bilad weekly is not a subscriber to AFP service and, therefore, it is strictly prohibited for that publication, or any other paper not subscribed to its service, to publish the agency's reports, at the risk of legal action.

Raouda Habib,
Director AFP,
Amman.

MP wins spar with opposition

To the Editor:

AL JAZIRA satellite station broadcast a dialogue between two Jordanian personalities, member of Parliament Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh and Laith Shbeilat, designated in the TV programme as a prominent opposition member. The encounter was broadcast on Jordan Television as well, on Aug. 28.

One cannot help but take this opportunity to express admiration for the way Mr. Rawabdeh dealt with his adversary, Mr. Shbeilat. Mr. Rawabdeh was knowledgeable, perceptive, realistic and firm. I have no doubt that Mr. Shbeilat is a patriot who means well for his country, but it takes more than that to serve Jordan in realistic and practical terms. Neither do I wish to deny that Mr. Shbeilat has valid complaints about certain things in the Jordanian society; but certainly, rash accusations, incitement and demagoguery are not the means to address these grievances. These attitudes will not gain anyone confidence with level-headed rational people and I do assume that Mr. Shbeilat wishes to have such people on his side.

It takes more than a Friday prayer to pull out a place in the sun for Jordan and to address its economic and geopolitical problems.

Decades of bitter experiences have enabled the leadership of this country to appreciate what can and should be done to serve and preserve the future of Jordan and prevent it from going down the drain like quite a few other countries in the area. Many people are, unfortunately, out of touch with the realities of the forces at play and how to balance-act them to come out with positive results for the country. Many countries in the area, with much more potential than Jordan, are in a less fortunate state than Jordan is, simply because of the lack of a rational leadership with foresight.

In our Arab Middle East, some people (maybe more than some) have a problem with their frame of mind — with their emotions, romanticism and the capacity to fantasise, to name but a few negative qualities of the local psyche — which renders them incapable of dealing with issues and problems on a down-to-earth, realistic way and appreciate the facts of life as they are and not as they are fantasised about by a run-away imagination. Such people simply live in a dream world full of wishful thinking that is completely out of touch with what is real and practical, leading to auto-suggestion, self-deception and quite often self-destruction. Many live in an ideological cage and hence do not have the vision of seeing things and comprehending them beyond the boundaries of that cage.

It was disastrous when Mr. Shbeilat decided to define Zionism and included in that definition not only Zionists proper but all those who are in a state of peace, or negotiating peace, i.e., half of the Palestinian people and, of course, Egypt and Jordan and eventually Syria, which was negotiating peace on certain conditions. It was simply irresponsible.

People like Mr. Shbeilat, who deny the incomplete form of democracy in Jordan, only do that when they are out of power; on the other hand, Mr. Shbeilat's adopted ideology is totalitarian, which is in no way compatible with pluralistic democracy, which he wants made available to him immediately.

Before concluding, I raise my hat to Mr. Rawabdeh for his performance in that encounter.

Omar Abbo,
Amman.

U.N. disarmament chief begins new mission in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AFP) — U.N. disarmament chief Richard Butler began his second mission to Iraq on Friday to evaluate Baghdad's progress on eliminating chemical, biological and long-range missile weapons.

Mr. Butler told reporters after his arrival that he will meet Sunday with Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz to discuss "what has been accomplished in the areas of ballistic missiles, chemical and biological weapons."

Mr. Butler, on his second trip to Baghdad since taking over as chairman of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) in charge of eliminating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, heads a delegation of 24 experts.

Missiles expert Nikita Sridovitch is part of the delegation, along with American Charles Duelfer, who has been on weapon inspection missions to Iraq since the end

of the 1991 Gulf war.

Iraq insists it has destroyed all its banned missiles with a range of more than 150 kilometres.

On August 27, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) said that analysis in the U.S. and France of destroyed missile parts dug up from the Iraqi desert proved that it had nothing more to hide.

Mr. Butler's mission, due to last until Tuesday, comes ahead of a report which he is to submit to the U.N. Security Council by October 11 on progress in dismantling Iraq's biological and chemical weaponry and long-range missiles.

They will review progress, since their first meeting in July, when the Australian arms expert replaced Swedish diplomat Rolf Ekeus. UNSCOM is still awaiting full details from Iraq on its germ warfare programmes.

U.N. sanctions imposed

after the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait can only be lifted when the UNSCOM inspectors certify that Iraq has dismantled all weapons of mass destruction and proscribed arms programmes.

The Security Council has threatened to impose additional sanctions against Baghdad in October if Mr. Butler reports that Baghdad is continuing to hinder the arms inspectors.

But since he took over, Iraq has adopted a conciliatory tone and at least five arms inspections have passed "very smoothly," according to Nils Carlstrom, director of the monitoring centre in Baghdad.

He said last month that Mr. Butler's second visit would focus on the working plan which the two sides agreed on in July. "The visit is to follow up on this plan, and how we can proceed with it," Mr. Carlstrom said.

Despite the "good start" which Mr. Butler has reported making with Iraq, Baghdad has renewed warnings that UNSCOM must respect Iraqi sovereignty while carrying out its work.

UNSCOM will have to abide by the terms of a June 1996 accord drawn up with Mr. Ekeus, a hate figure in Iraq who was involved in several crises with Baghdad, the official newspaper Al Jumhuriya said.

The accord calls for Baghdad to guarantee access to all weapons sites for UNSCOM, while the commission committed itself to work swiftly to complete its mission while respecting Iraq's sovereignty and security concerns.

Iraq raised the issues of concern for its sovereignty when it blocked UNSCOM missions in May and June.

Unprecedented, Queen addresses nation after royal blitz on London to show royalty cares about Di's tragic death

(Continued from page 12)

For some, the need to emulate Diana's more human touch seems to have already impressed itself on the queen, anxious to restore some of the monarchy's battered prestige.

Queen Elizabeth II orchestrated a royal blitz on London Friday to stamp out public criticism that the monarchy had failed to share in the nation's outpouring of grief over the death of Diana.

The entire royal family returned to London from Balmoral, Scotland, and set out in all directions to meet the people and share publicly in the national mourning.

Protocol was thrown to the winds.

The queen, as she drove into Buckingham Palace, stopped her car at the gates and walked to look at the thousands of hunches of flowers left there in Diana's memory before chatting to some of the tens of thousands of people in front of the palace.

Earlier Prince Charles and his sons William, 15, and Harry, 12, went to Kensington Palace to see the flowers there.

They also plunged into the waiting crowds. Tears flowed during the 15-minute encounter, as Prince Charles and the young princes met with sympathy and warm words.

Princes William and Harry accepted bouquets of flowers from the people, some smiling and others weeping, and laid them in front of the palace wall.

"There were cries of 'God bless you,' and 'we love you,' from the crowd."

Many people had

tears running down their faces as they grasped the hands of the two boys. "We're so sorry, so sorry," were the words on everyone's lips.

Afterwards the queen and Prince Philip went to Saint James's Palace, where Diana's body is lying at rest, to pay their last respects.

When she left the queen again mingled with mourners.

The royal family decided to cut short a stay in Balmoral, after being accused, notably by the press, of being out of touch with the mood of a nation still trying to come to terms with the loss of its "Queen of Hearts."

Some royal commentators say the 11th hour gestures could be too little, too late, but others defend the family's right to grieve out of the public spotlight.

But most felt that Friday's blitz had defused some of the tensions. The royal family has had to "reinvent the art of being royal," said one.

What has become increasingly clear is that time-honoured royal protocol is no longer enough for the British people who are mourning the human face and common touch which Diana brought to the monarchy, even when she had been ousted from its inner circles and stripped of the title "Her Royal Highness."

The queen has already let it be known that she and the rest of the royal family have been "hurt" by press attacks accusing them of being indifferent to the greatest outpouring of national grief in living memory.

It is rare for the

monarch to address the nation, apart from an annual Christmas greeting. The only previous time the queen made a special address was for the Gulf War in 1991.

Originally, the queen and other senior royals had planned to return to London overnight Friday by train to be in the capital Saturday morning for the funeral service in Westminster Abbey.

Throughout the week the palace has been struggling to match public demand. Under public pressure, the palace had to increase the number of books of condolence open to the public at Saint James's Palace from one to 43.

It also had to lengthen the route Diana's funeral cortege will take to Westminster Abbey to cope with the millions of people expected to want to say a last farewell to the princess.

And it has now decided, again under response to public clamour, that when the queen leaves the palace on the day of the funeral, her personal flag, the Royal Standard, will be lowered and, for the first time ever, the Union Jack will fly in its place, at half mast.

Prime Minister Tony Blair, who has insisted that the funeral of the "people's princess" should not just be for the "great and good," has taken an unprecedented role in the arrangements which traditionally are left to the palace.

The press gloated that it was the media, echoing public feelings, which had forced the royal family to keep changing the plans for Saturday's funeral.

A triumphant colum-

nist in the Daily Express said "They used to tell us what to do. Now we tell them," and predicted an uncertain future for the monarchy.

But the seething anger of Diana's brother Earl Spencer has not diminished.

He blamed the tabloid press for hounding Diana, and contributing to her death in Sunday's Paris car crash. He has asked that the editors invited to the Westminster Abbey service should not attend "out of respect" for her.

Saturday's funeral will be watched by hundreds of millions across the globe and attended by world personalities, including Her Majesty Queen Noor, U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton, and Pakistani cricket-turned-politician Imran Khan.

And police are prepared for up to six million people taking to the streets Saturday for a glimpse of Diana's cortege.

Amid signs that grief over Diana's death is verging on hysteria, the Spencer family decided to bury the princess in the grounds of the family estate at Althorp, central England, rather than in the family crypt at the local parish church of Great Brington.

There were fears that the village, 120 kilometres north-west of London, could have become a shrine for thousands of visitors for years to come.

The decision was taken so that "the grave can be properly looked after by her family, and visited in privacy by her sons," said the earl.

Timetable for 'a unique occasion'

(Continued from page 12)

There then follows another hymn "The King of Love my Shepherd is," after which Prime Minister Tony Blair will read from Corinthians XIII.

Princess Diana's friend the pop singer Elton John will then perform an adapted version of his hit song "Candle in the Wind", initially composed for Marilyn Monroe.

Afterwards Earl Charles Spencer, Princess Diana's brother, will make the main tribute to his sister. In contrast to the rest of the service and perhaps in an indication of his dislike for the press, Mr. Spencer has not distributed the text of his address in advance.

The head of the Church of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey will then lead prayers for Diana, her family, the royal family, all who mourn, the princess's life and work and for "ourselves."

His prayer for Diana gives thanks for her "vulnerability, her radiant and vibrant personality, her ability to communicate

warmth and compassion, her ringing laugh and above all her readiness to identify with those less fortunate in our nation and the world."

His prayer for her family makes special mention of Prince William and Prince Harry. "Have compassion on those for whom this parting brings particular pain and the deepest sense of loss," Mr. Carey will say.

And in his prayer for all who mourn, the archbishop will mention Dodi Fayed, Diana's boyfriend and their driver Henri Paul, who also died in the Paris car crash.

There then follows the Lord's Prayer, the blessing, the hymn "Guide me O Thou Great Redeemer" and the Commendation.

After this, the cortege will leave the abbey during which the choir will sing "Alleluia. May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest" and extracts from William Shakespeare's Hamlet and the orthodox funeral service.

As the procession reaches the west end of the Abbey, it will halt for a minute's silence, which

will be observed across the country at the request of the royal family.

This will end with the half-muffled bells of the Abbey.

Finally, after a service lasting about an hour, the coffin will be placed in a hearse for the drive to the Spencer family home at Althorp in central England, where the princess will be buried in a private family ceremony.

Meanwhile, London's Metropolitan Police have prepared for crowds of up to six million people at the funeral of Diana in what many observers predict will be the capital's biggest crowd-control exercise.

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Paul Condon said that the police had prepared for the biggest crowd seen in the capital for decades and that up to 27,000 Metropolitan Police officers would be involved in the event.

However, the police commissioner ruled out participation by the armed forces.

"I am confident we will deal with this. We have

had occasions in London in the past when several million people have been in central London," Mr. Condon said.

While the police said that it was as yet unclear just how many mourners would turn out to line the route of the funeral procession, they said that they would be able to marshal up to six million mourners.

"We are prepared for absolutely any potential contingency," Mr. Condon said.

Mr. Condon said the arrangements for the policing of the funeral were seeking to respond to three key issues.

He listed them as: "First, public safety, in anticipation of several million people being present in central London."

"Secondly, the security, feelings and dignity of those who will take part in the funeral procession."

"Finally, the need of the nation to express its collective grief and for potentially millions of people to be able to be present and to see the procession."

After holding hands with son, British press supports Charles

(Continued from page 12)

1992, the media have attacked both parties, although they were keenly aware that pictures and stories on Princess Diana, the most photographed woman in the world, had a more beneficial effect on circulation.

Princess Diana often complained at the media's infatuation with her, and paparazzi photographers are being questioned by French police about their role in the Paris crash which killed Princess Diana and her companion, Dodi Fayed.

Only hours after Princess Diana's death, columnists, who had earlier condemned her as manipulative and misguided because of her friendship with millionaire Fayed, were hailing her compassion and grace.

Another graceful 180-degree turn was executed Friday by newspapers who have dedicated reams of newsprint to what one journalist cynically called "The death of the century."

The Daily Mail Thursday asked "why can't the royal family show their grief?" Friday it told Britons: "Why we must support the royal family."

The Mirror was amazed by the "heart-breaking" sight of Prince Charles giving Prince Harry a little hug.

"This is indeed a new

royal family. A royal family of which Princess Diana would be proud," it said.

"She came into conflict with them because they seemed unable to display normal human emotions. Yesterday they showed they had learned that lesson from her."

The queen was congratulated for adjusting to pressure from the public — and of course its mouthpiece, the media. "We salute Her Majesty for her actions," said the Express in its leader.

Just in case the queen thought the paper had been infected with republicanism, the right-wing express explained it had never accused her of being hard-hearted but just wanted her to show she cared.

"She did exactly what we and the nation asked, and precisely what Princess Diana would have wanted her to do," the Express said.

"So today we say humbly: Thank you ma'am."

The Times, once regarded as the establishment's newspaper, also appeared to regret Thursday's outbursts by the more excitable members of the media.

It explained to the queen how important the media were to the royal family in being able to "echo and articulate their feelings (without which) these multitudes would not have been able to make themselves

understood in Balmoral."

The press must be sensitive to its readers' views, the Times editorial said. "Yesterday's palace statement, that the royal family had been 'hurt' by press criticism, is evidence of a fatal tendency to blame the messenger," it added.

But the Sun, Britain's best-selling daily, was still upset with the royal family.

It claimed that the queen only bowed to public pressure after Prince Charles had, for the first time in his life, stood up to his mother and father, Prince Philip, and insisted that his family "tear off the royal mask of insensitivity."

Charles's parents and their rigid adherence to 19th century ideas of parenthood have often been blamed for his problems with Diana. Three of the monarch's four children have divorced and the youngest, Edward, is unmarried.

"When the shock of Diana's death and the tears over her funeral have passed, many people who have always held the royal family in the highest esteem will be asking serious questions about its future," the Sun said.

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Budget deficit of GCC states easing despite high spending

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf oil producers are gradually regaining control over their spiralling budget deficits despite being tempted to increase spending by strong crude oil prices, experts have said.

From a record 30 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 1991, the deficit in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was slashed to less than 10 per cent in 1994 and around four per cent in 1996, the experts said.

The shortfall is expected to dive to one of its lowest levels this year as crude prices remained strong and non-oil earnings will likely be higher.

"The performance of the public and private sector so far this year indicates Gulf governments are spending generously," a Saudi banker said.

"Yet I think the deficit will be low by the end of the year as revenues have already shot far above projections. Our expectations are that the GCC deficit will be in the range of three to four per cent of the GDP," he added.

Oil prices have a strong impact on the economies of GCC states — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the

United Arab Emirates (UAE) — as crude sales account for 35 per cent of the GDP and 80 per cent of the exports.

Most GCC states over-shot projected expenditure in 1996 because of an increase of more than \$3 a barrel in oil prices.

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil producer and exporter, was tempted to spend nearly \$11.8 billion above its forecast \$40 billion although it has vowed to trim expenditure to tackle a persistent deficit.

It again could not resist strong prices this year, projecting spending as high as \$48.2 billion but a relatively low deficit.

The UAE, the second oil power in the GCC, also boosted spending to a record \$19.4 billion in 1996, but the deficit fell to \$4.8 billion from \$5.3 billion due to a rise of nearly 26 per cent in oil export earnings.

"Because of such an expected increase in oil revenues, most GCC countries largely boosted expenditure over projected levels. But at the same time, they were able to cut the deficit," said the Amman-based Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA), an affiliate of the United Nations.

GCC states produce nearly 13.5 million barrels per day of oil, of which around 11.5 million bpd are exported.

Crude prices have averaged nearly \$19 a barrel so far this year, far higher than GCC budget projections of between \$13 and \$17 a barrel.

Jobless rate rises in Israel

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The number of job seekers in Israel rose 1.1 per cent in July to reach 145,000, the labour ministry has reported.

The ministry said the number of those actively seeking employment had risen 11 per cent since the beginning of the year.

The last figures from the government statistics bureau which calculates the overall unemployment rate put it at 7.3 per cent as of March 31, up from 7.1 per cent in December and 6.3 per cent at the end of 1996.

In further worrisome news for the Israeli economy, the Bank of Israel has reported that overall investment fell 11 per cent during the first half of the year compared to the final six months of 1996.

The growth rate of the Israeli economy was only two per cent during the same period, compared to more than three per cent two years ago.

Economists say the Israeli slowdown is due to a combination of factors including relative high interest rates which have hindered domestic investment and a drop in foreign investment due to concern over the future of the embattled peace process.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Prices as at 5/09/97 20:52									
US Dollar	1.7895	0.6278	1.4758	121.00	1.3823	1754.00	2.0284	6.0535	
DE Mark	0.5597	0.3400	0.5199	87.26	0.7682	374.44	1.1282	3.3841	
GB Sterling	1.5329	2.8880	2.3484	192.52	2.3019	2792.02	3.2259	9.6360	
CH Franc	0.6777	121.91	0.4282						4.1010
JP Yen	0.0083	1.4862	0.5185	1.2185					5.0008
DK Krone	0.7294	1.3023	0.4539	1.2654	1.14				4.3817
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0245	0.3574	0.0840	1482.22				3.4473
NL Guilder	0.4835	88.78	0.3098	72.76	0.6818	885.15			2.8858
FR Franc	0.1652	0.2970	0.1038	24.3540	0.2282	33.46			33.4600

Middle Eastern Currencies									
US Dollar	0.7050	3.7594	0.3770	3.8402	0.3050	3.6728	1537.00	3.3970	
Jordan Dinar	0.4124								
Saudi Riyal	0.2888	0.1888		0.1005	0.97	0.0813	0.98	408.82	0.0958
Bahraini Dinar	2.88	1.5789	9.9483		0.88	0.8090	8.74	4677.03	0.0106
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0303	1.0303		0.0838	1.01	422.23	0.9332
Kuwait Dinar	3.2787	2.3213	12.3984	1.2384			12.04	5038.34	0.9332
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0211	1.0211	0.0830			418.48	0.9249
Lebanese Lira	0.05	0.4806	2.4491	0.2453	2.3894	0.1894	2.3896		2.2101
Egyptian	0.2944	0.2084	1.1040	0.1110	1.0718	0.0898	1.0812	452.48	

Energy	
Brent	18.53 18.26
WTI	18.64 19.43
Bonny	18.53 18.26
Dubai	17.35 17.58
U.S. Gas	205.00

Mid-East Currencies	
SA Riyal	0.2888 0.4708 0.1674 0.3036 32.277
AE Dirham	0.2723 0.48 0.1708 0.4019 32.859
KW Dinar	3.2787 2.5897 2.5858 4.8403 396.83
BH Dinar	0.3770 4.7733 1.8853 3.9154 321.13
CY Pound	1.4779 3.3783 1.1785 2.7899 27.223

Metal Prices	
Gold (oz's)	321.9 322.4
Silver (oz's)	4.72 4.74
Platinum (oz's)	429.5 429.5
AL (3 Months)	1602 1605
CU (3 Months)	2151 2158
Zinc (3 Months)	1478 1480
Lead (3 Months)	848 852
Ni (3 Months)	6990 6720

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)	
USD	5.53 5.59 5.71 5.84 5.93
GBP	7.06 7.18 7.31 7.43 7.56
JPY	0.45 0.45 0.46 0.48 0.49
DEM	5.04 5.19 5.24 5.25 5.30
FRF	3.22 3.30 3.39 3.50 3.60
CHF	1.25 1.37 1.58 1.68 1.75
ITL	6.76 6.72 6.58 6.45 6.36

Main Equity Indices	
New York	DOW JONES 7807.08 -60.16 -0.78 7842.3 7806.4 7867.2
New York	S&P 500 928.85 -4.02 -0.43 940.37 926.8 930.87
London	FT-SE 100 4884.2 2.9 0.06 5028.3 4884.3 4991.3
Tokyo	Nikkei 225 18858.17 35.13 0.19 18671 18485 18815
Paris	CAC 40 2924.51 -2.48 -0.08 2966 2918 2927
Frankfurt	DAX 4190.57 28.98 -0.71 4103.3 4088.2 4071.7

Energy	
Crude oil (bbl's)	205.00 Spot
Coffee (c/lbs)	77.44 Spot
Sugar (c/lbs)	333 Spot
Wheat (c/lbs)	141 Spot
Soybean (c/lbs)	22.82 Spot
Text (c/lbs)	155 Spot
Barley (c/lbs)	0 Spot
Rice (c/lbs)	430 Spot

JOD Cross Rates	
US Dollar	0.706 0.710
GB Sterling	1.1202 1.1258
DE Mark	0.3885 0.3904
CH Franc	0.4703 0.4727
FR Franc	0.1155 0.1181
JP Yen	0.5841 0.587
NL Guilder	0.3448 0.3466
IT Lira	0.3985 0.4005

*Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Proposal to boost taxes facing stiff opposition in Lebanon

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — Lebanese labour unions have threatened to strike if the government goes ahead with a proposal to hike gasoline taxes to fund rural development and the settlement of displaced people. Prime Minister Rafik Hariri proposed at a cabinet meeting that the government borrow \$1 billion

to finance rural development in eastern and northern Lebanon and secure the return home of thousands of people displaced during the 1975-90 civil war. Gasoline prices would be raised 50 per cent and a five per cent tax on the sale of goods, excluding food and medicine, would be imposed to repay the loan.

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Peanuts

WELCOME TO THIS YEAR'S ALL-STAR GAME!

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LAST YEAR I WAS THE ONLY ONE..

Andy Capp

IF I GO NOW I CAN JUST CATCH THE LAST BUS.

WALK ME TO THE STOP?

SORRY, DEAR, I WOULD, BUT I'VE GOT A TONCH OF CRAMP.

HE'S NOT WHAT HE WAS TWENTY YEARS AGO - HE'S FIVE YEARS OLDER.

Mutt'n' Jeff

THE LITTLE BOOB THINKS HE KNOWS WHERE THE FISH ARE!

I GOT SIX!

HOW MANY CHA CATCH, JEFF?

ONE!

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

1 More docile

6 Coin of Cuba

10 Kind of party

14 Author of "Butterfield 8"

15 Journalist's source

16 Money in Mantua

17 Corday's victim

18 Taj Mahal site

19 Extremely small part

20 Hit song of 1948

23 Weight abbr.

24 First of the yr.

25 River to the Euphrates

29 Winged horse

33 Composer of 49A

34 Gardner of films

35 Woos

37 Hit song of 1944

41 Faction

42 Caviar

43 Callas of opera

44 Units of force

46 Web-footed birds

47 Switch positions

48 Costello or Rawls

49 Hit song of 1939

57 — Beach, Fla.

58 Adam's grandson

59 Clan emblem

61 Superimposed

62 Kind of mgr.

63 Buffet patron

64 Get thinner

65 Pitiful grades

66 Discontinues

DOWN

1 Alley prowler

2 Moby Dick's pursuer

3 Japanese ship name

4 Part of Q.E.D.

5 Sounding like a jalopy

6 Blueprints

7 Brain scans, for short

8 1984 Olympics site

9 Lake —, Canada

10 Chunk

11 Yugoslav leader

12 Lined up

13 Muffins

21 Out-of-date: abbr.

22 Genetic strands

25 Russian news agency

26 Comic Corey

27 Proceed effortlessly

28 Vitalize

29 Senate gofers

30 Strong fiber

31 Too-too

32 Did in

36 Ladies of Spain: abbr.

38 Stupid person

39 Poppycock

40 Became, with "to"

45 Child

46 —disant

48 Wears

49 Like Clinton's office

50 Refuse consent

51 Desire personified

52 Lasso

53 Showy bloom

54 Wild pig

55 "Beetle Bailey" dog

56 Cry

60 — Miniver

PIARE BAIL COST

ALOT CARDS ONLY

CATCHASCATCHCAN

KIT OSS REEVE

EROTIC MURI

SNIPETLAINBC

ECTALFIGSALA

COOLASACUCUMBER

OUTACHEPOLAR

NTHAGEESTOUT

ELLSALUTE

ASCOTCARMOA

BLOWONESOWNHORN

BOREAVERSBOLO

EWERYAWNONYX

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HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1997

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get busy studying your accounts today for accuracy and then proceed with your career activities. Be sure to avoid a disagreement between a newcomer and an old friend, otherwise words could be exchanged which could be hazardous.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Handle your own affairs wisely. You should seek advice from others, since these suggestions could be quite beneficial. Take it easy later this evening and rest up for the days ahead which could be hectic.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Sensibly go about your own business today, however, if you need assistance don't be afraid to ask. You should not bother with the affairs of others. Show devotion and generosity towards your loved ones.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Think about those friends who have been most loyal and kind to you, do something today to show your gratitude. Later this evening will go for you to meet with fellow associates and discuss your career activities.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Handle outside affairs wisely today, and make this a profitable daytime. You should not plan to spend too much for entertainment, thereby you will have some extra funds for any emergency, especially if it occurs in the days ahead.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Study every phase of a new project today, thereby determining if your plans will be successful. You should not mix into any altercation between loved ones and a stranger. Look to elders for advice with career activities.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Labour hard at your duties today and decide how best to make your loved ones pleased. Your mate has a worthwhile and convincing plan, so listen to what is suggested. Set your mind to completing what you start.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Spend more time today with a fellow associate who can give you more data concerning a project you are working on. You should be influenced by bigwigs who have many good ideas, whereby you can be successful with career activities.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You had better get at your career activities today, thereby you can gain recognition from a bigwig. Don't waste time lighting into others. Postpone that discussion with a loved one until a more appropriate moment.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Use your talents and energies today for something important you want to do. Forget that private sadness you have and make the best of any bad situation, without causing any difficulties with your loved ones.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Get at those duties today which you have been putting aside for sometime at home, and they are soon completed. Solve your financial difficulties by putting together a better budget which will allow you extra funds for an emergency.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is a good day today for handling communications well, however, avoid a bigwig who is full of ire. You should not be too critical of your loved ones or close friends, otherwise you could create a difficult situation.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

Arab Bank for International Trade

Raising produce any amount of

THE BETTER HALF

JUMBLE

INAF

MOBOL

DOYLOB

WEARLY

Print answer here

Arab Bank fuels bull market

By Suleiman Al Khalidi

Reuters

AMMAN — Arab Bank, the only Jordanian bank with a global reach, single-handedly ignited a bull run on the Amman stock exchange last week after relaxation of foreign ownership rules, analysts and bankers said Thursday.

Heavy demand for the bank's shares has fuelled a four-year high on the official market's 60-share index since Jordan scrapped a 50 per cent ceiling on foreign ownership of most shares last Monday.

"It's a hibernating giant which has been woken up," said Omar Al Masri, head of Atlas Investment Group (AIG), referring to the weighting of the share which alone accounts for over 40 per cent of Amman Financial Market's \$4.7 billion capitalisation.

"What's good for GM (General Motors) is good for the U.S. so what's good for Arab Bank is good for the market," Mr. Masri added.

Arab Bank has soared nine per cent in only three days while other blue chips tagging along behind.

Its shares are expected to continue to rise above the current price/earnings ratio of 13.5 per cent which compares favourably to peers in the 17 per cent range.

Analysts say demand may then switch to the second tier of blue-chip shares, including

other banks and industrial firms.

Foreign and local investors have focused on the share, as global players have been encouraged by last week's ruling to raise their asset allocations in the bourse.

Arab Bank, which with assets of \$20 billion is the only truly global firm among the 95 listed on the Amman official market.

With a network of over 150 branches around the world and a dozen subsidiaries in the region, U.S. Europe, Africa and Australia, the bank is a global player in a domestic corporate scene still dominated by family-owned firms, often tightly controlled by family concerns, which ensures limited liquidity.

Opening the door to foreign ownership in Arab Bank will allow entry of players who previously shunned the market because the bank's exclusion restricted their allocations in Jordan's 0.03 per cent weighting in the World Bank's IFC investible index.

"Now that Arab Bank is open, funds will invest in a whole range of stock... It will inherently attract non-Arab bank-bound investment," Mr. Masri said.

Furthermore, Arab Bank's global and regional presence makes it more than a Jordanian story. Nearly 38 per cent of its total \$14 billion deposits are held in Arab states, 25.2 per cent in Europe and 10.4 per cent in North America.

"It's a Middle East story, by adding it in the portfolio you are satisfying Jordan and regional allocations," Mr. Masri said.

Analysts say Arab Bank's dominance will continue until a more dynamic privatisation process surfaces in Jordan and major state corporations such as telecommunications are listed.

This is not expected until early next year at the soonest.

So far three infrastructure firms which have attracted foreign interest — Arab Potash, Jordan Phosphates and Jordan Cement — have not been affected by the ownership liberalisation steps.

But even these blue chips have only some of the attractions which Arab Bank seems to combine — its weighting as the bluest of the bluechips, the regional presence, and its undervalued price earnings ratio relative to its regional peers.

But a sharp jump in Arab Bank's price, which analysts say is a product of a current supply shortage despite this week's ruling, may spell problems ahead by causing wide market fluctuations in a market which still suffers from liquidity.

Nearly a quarter of Arab Bank's shares are held by members of the Jordanian-Palestinian Shorman family, while another 11 per cent are held by the governments of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Raising productivity is higher than any amount of investment — Azar

** ACCORDING TO Wasef Azar, general manager of the Jordan National Bank, the balance of payments is not one of the main economic irregularities in Jordan. The imbalance is in the programme of introducing qualified manpower and training it to become efficient elements in developing the economy.

Mr. Azar, who is also an economic writer, highlighted the productivity factor and noted that we always talk about investment as being the only way to increase production and wider employment opportunities. "It is known that productivity, either in terms of capital or work, is low," he indicated. "So, if we double productivity in the Jordanian economy as a whole, it is as if we have invested JD20 billion new money." As such, he emphasised, raising productivity is higher than any amount of investment that can be done.

The known banker, who headed the phosphate company for many years in the past, urged the government not to be very strict on the trade exchange between Jordan and Iraq noting that "many countries are carrying out exports whereas Jordan is avoiding

it." In an earlier lecture, Mr. Azar accused executive government institutions of following a complicated routine process that "compels investors to run away after being vexed with what is needed and it is not needed." He said that civil servants in Jordan show "clear and frank antagonism" to every investor and show "disregard to people's money, time and nerves," despite daily calls by senior government officials to give assistance and support to investors.

Mr. Azar criticised the difficulties and barriers as well as the delays and postponements by government employees who claim to be implementing laws and regulations. "Most of the investors are going in circles without finding an exit to counter the complications put to them by public employees," he said. "Unable to find out where to go to sort out the problems, each of the investors become a voice speaking against investing in Jordan," the banker added noting that the investors spread their dissatisfaction when meeting in social activities and conferences. (Al Dustour & Al Aswaj)



"Potato chips aren't rubbery and blubbery like fat. They're crispy and crunchy like lettuce. That proves they're diet food!"

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henry Arnold and Mike Argillon

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

INAFT
MOBOL
DOYLOB
WEARLY

Print answer here: _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble Answer: TWINE MANLY DAHLIA DITHER Why the night owl went home - IT "DAWNED" ON HIM

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ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (30/08/1997 - 02/09/1997)														
WEEKLY REPORT														
														
DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS														
HIGH	LOW	COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES EXECUTED	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE MARKET PRICE	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
299.000	299.000	ARAB BANK	15.0	1.23	297	13250	4118570	299.00	328.00	295.00	326.00	+31.00	310.835	5
2.050	1.940	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	-	0.00	145	149371	288126	1.99	1.98	1.85	1.55	-.01	1.525	9
6.460	5.150	CALIN AMMAN BANK	10.2	2.00	4	2290	11450	5.20	5.00	5.00	5.00	-.20	9.000	2
3.080	3.050	BANK OF JORDAN	6.4	0.00	13	755919	2444572	3.08	3.22	2.06	2.06	-.02	2.230	7
10.190	9.990	JOR. EASTERN INV. INC.	60.4	0.00	15	7000	6399	9.91	9.92	9.80	9.92	-.01	9.914	2
2.270	2.250	INDUSTRIAL DEV. INC.	9.0	6.94	16	22537	50481	2.25	2.28	2.22	2.25	-.03	2.240	5
4.840	4.750	THE HOUSING BK.	14.2	6.08	25	19234	51823	4.75	4.75	4.74	4.75	-.01	4.745	5
2.200	2.000	JOR. KOWATY BANK	12.6	0.00	27	759284	2453847	2.00	2.28	2.12	2.28	-.18	2.229	7
8.000	7.750	JOR. GULF BANK	6.5	5.21	7	15150	11528	7.75	7.77	7.76	7.76	-.04	7.761	076
3.580	2.600	ARAB JOR. INV. INC.	17.3	0.00	1	750	2700	3.60	3.60	2.60	3.60	-.01	3.400	3
1.230	2.810	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	16.2	3.02	117	42889	168589	2.80	4.00	3.89	3.98	-.08	2.931	294
1.230	1.260	UNION BK. DEV. INC.	17.6	0.00	2	650	684	1.27	1.26	1.22	1.22	-.04	1.244	002
3.300	3.200	JOR. INV. DEV. BANK	22.9	0.00	17	2800	12844	3.20	3.41	3.33	3.41	-.11	3.280	3
1.050	1.010	RETT. AL-HAL (JORDIA)	6	18.31	2	350	241	1.01	1.01	1.01	1.01	-.03	1.014	1
BANKS SECTOR					716	1502890	9492238	INDEX NUMBER : 234.38		CHANGE : + 5.153				
1.830	1.640	JOR. FRENCH ENTER.	9.1	8.38	5	6250	11257	1.77	1.85	1.78	1.79	-.02	1.801	1
INSURANCE SECTOR					5	5250	11257	INDEX NUMBER : 115.02		CHANGE : + 0.114				
1.710	1.650	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.2	8.98	98	84077	140401	1.66	1.69	1.64	1.68	-.02	1.670	9
1.940	1.420	THE HOUSING BANK	12.3	6.05	3	500	958	1.30	1.33	1.30	1.30	-.01	1.316	017
2.790	2.750	KEDER KOWATY	14.6	5.40	2	2900	8084	2.75	2.89	2.89	2.89	-.14	2.887	2
6.600	6.600	VECLA. KOWATY	5.2	4.67	8	12500	87680	6.60	7.50	6.92	7.50	-.09	7.128	2
8.000	9.000	ARAB INV. INC.	14.6	4.21	8	2819	18140	5.00	4.79	4.79	4.78	-.28	4.750	042
2.880	2.880	SHIPPING LINES	16.4	4.61	2	2500	7902	2.80	2.82	2.80	2.82	-.02	2.901	034
1.410	1.350	JOR. INVEST. INC.	-	0.00	130	12715	18260	1.40	1.50	1.39	1.43	-.03	1.439	2
1.970	1.950	REAL ESTATE INC.	12.8	6.52	8	7514	6898	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	-.01	1.918	259
1.950	1.950	JORDAN INV. INC.	27.7	0.00	12	8950	4698	1.92	1.94	1.92	1.94	-.01	1.920	3
4.900	4.780	ALARA	12.0	7.46	1	300	2010	4.78	6.70	6.70	6.70	-.09	6.700	019
1.220	1.240	KID. EAST MODELS	19.5	0.00	2	750	960	1.27	1.28	1.28	1.28	-.01	1.280	019
2.580	2.580	JOR. CHEMICAL IND.	5.8	0.00	59	100478	227948	2.58	3.40	3.22	3.24	-.02	3.397	294
1.090	1.090	SAHRA EDUCATION	-	0.00	40	28414	29474	1.08	1.06	1.03	1.09	-.01	1.037	636
1.830	1.740	UNION BANK	6	1.34	42	13850	24044	1.74	1.76	1.72	1.72	-.01	1.734	277
1.700	1.670	UNION LAND DEV.	8	0.00	9	28500	21269	1.70	1.79	1.70	1.79	-.05	1.746	970
SERVICES SECTOR					422	422277	872711	INDEX NUMBER : 110.82		CHANGE : - 1.004				
4.000	3.850	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	24.2	2.83	98	80001	310477	3.88	3.90	3.82	3.89	-.01	2.881	132
2.960	3.890	JOR. PROSPERITY MERS	10.9	2.43	21	111052	424444	3.89	3.89	3.80	3.80	-.09	2.822	252
6.300	6.000	ARAB POTASH CO.	16.3	2.26	7	40129	246024	6.00	6.13	6.00	6.13	-.13	6.130	050
10.210	9.950	JOR. PETRO. ENTERPRISE	10.1	8.61	89	5921	61964	10.21	10.45	10.20	10.45	-.14	10.280	092
4.700	4.700	JORDAN TRADING	8.6	8.82	7	898	4270	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70	-.01	4.700	040
1.260	1.150	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	10.2	8.47	3	1300	1838	1.20	1.20	1.16	1.18	-.02	1.182	130
1.820	1.620	INDUSTRIAL CONSUM.	-	0.00	18	2081	2912	1.62	1.71	1.62	1.71	-.09	1.508	042
6.000	5.900	JOR. MORTGAGE BANK	9.9	3.25	8	4439	27074	5.99	6.18	6.00	6.19	-.20	6.099	113
4.250	4.060	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	11.9	4.64	186	49198	208716	4.12	4.38	4.11	4.31	-.19	4.242	547
6.100	6.100	JOR. CHEMICAL IND.	6.0	10.95	30	6470	15055	6.10	5.80	5.80	5.80	-.30	5.782	069
1.490	1.460	JORDAN DAIRY	8.9	0.00	2	200	909	2.92	3.23	2.92	3.23	-.01	2.828	021
6.160	5.970	JOR. CHEM. ENTER.	19.8	2.65	6	1250	5053	6.14	6.49	6.49	6.45	-.31	6.490	188
1.160	1.120	BAPTA INDUSTRIES	-	0.00	3	650	716	1.14	1.10	1.10	1.10	-.04	1.100	065
9.500	9.300	DAR ALAMMA DEV. INC.	12.5	4.92	29	18987	104658	5.48	8.98	5.90	5.93	-.09	5.504	216
2.420	2.220	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.3	10.95	20	6470	15055	2.22	2.27	2.22	2.28	-.06	2.297	113
1.490	1.460	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9.9	0.00	22	21100	10204	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	-.01	1.464	670
2.690	3.690	GENERAL INVESTMENT	7.4	4.07	2	5682	21002	3.69	3.69	3.65	3.65	-.04	2.590	167
1.060	1.020	ARAB PAPER CO.	33.0	0.00	38	19550	20984	1.04	1.10	1.04	1.08	-.04	1.072	559
1.920	1.810	NATIONAL INDUS.	-	0.00	38	24050	18238	1.81	1.81	1.81	1.81	-.04	1.810	5
1.570	1.550	INTERNATIONAL PETRO. CHEM.	-	0.00	68	20200	17322	1.55	1.59	1.59	1.58	-.02	1.574	759
1.490	1.490	JOR. ROYALTY INDUS.	-	0.00	8	10547	6517	1.49	1.46	1.46	1.46	-.02	1.494	2
1.980	1.970	UNIV. CHEM. INDUS.	12.7	6.58	4	1000	1928	1.97	1.97	1.92	1.92	-.09	1.915	067
2.230	2.070	WALL. CARLE WIRE MFG.	33.7	0.00	1	400	840	2.07	2.10	2.10	2.10	-.03	2.100	008
1.650	1.590	JOR. SULPHUR CHEM.	-	0.00	16	10050	6255	1.61	1.62	1.61	1.62	-.01	1.624	223
1.270	1.250	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	17.5	8.11	52	49839	63139	1.31	1.32	1.30	1.32	-.05	1.399	917
1.300	1.100	UNIV. HIGH. INDUS.	486.1	2.0	67	89125	72923	1.39	1.30	1.26	1.28	-.01	1.264	183
1.670	1.670	JOR. INDUS. RESEARCHES	12.5	10.75	62	18900	17770	1.52	1.93	1.93	1.93	-.01	1.919	236
1.600	1.450	WALL. CHLORINE	14.4	4.58	21	12350	18946	1.52	1.56	1.51	1.53	-.01	1.534	172
1.470	1.470	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.8	0.00	27	12200	10452	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	-.01	1.457	153
1.600	1.480	UD -RAY READY MARK	56.7	0.00	47	18002	29483	1.50	1.61	1.50	1.61	-.11	1.568	251
1.310	1.140	WEL. TOBACCO	6.4	0.00	37	38398	45832	1.18	1.20	1.18	1.20	-.02	1.184	384
1.020	9.950	UNION CHEM & WAG.	51.4	0.00	161	121550	141170	9.99	1.12	1.00	1.13	-.14	1.072	2923
INDUSTRIAL SECTORS					1231	794975	1259442	INDEX NUMBER : 121.58		CHANGE : + 1.131				
GRAND TOTAL					2378	3027092	12505846	INDEX NUMBER : 172.60		CHANGE : + 4.903				
														
PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (30/08/1997 - 02/09/1997)														
WEEKLY REPORT														
DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS														
HIGH	LOW	COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES EXECUTED	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE MARKET PRICE	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
360	340	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	-	0.00	17	26100	5139	34	39	39	39	+.01	250	751
420	400	JOR. TRADE INC.	10.7	0.00	49	72190	28997	40	39	40	39	-.01	284	1718
460	500	FIN. REP. SEC. HALL	5.00	0.00	11	11500	5622	50	50	49	50	-.01	499	998
710	280	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	-	0.00	119	370427	144618	28	40	38	39	-.01	390	2705
470	490	UNION INV. 502	-	0.00	94	425999	87654	71	72	70	73	+.02	206	1826
1.120	1.060	KARA FOR INVESTMENT	72.2	0.00	9	20160	22166	1.12	1.13	1.10	1.10	-.02	1.100	0050
970	940	JOR. FIN. DEV. INC.	757.7	0.00	101	87896	110607	97	68	66	67	-.03	604	250
780	480	AL-DANIELYAN 781	72.0	0.00	45	128768	53642	74	75	73	74	-.01	450	927
890	850	AL-SHARQ DEV. CO.	239.2	0.00	5	7266	6175	85	85	85	85	-.01	850	081
530	500	ARAB FOOD & MED.	-	0.00	12	9850	4908	80	80	80	80	-.01	498	251
420	390	ARAB INTEL. DEV. INC.	44.5	0.00	23	13600	5214	39	39	39	39	-.01	383	272
270	250	JOR. INDUS. RESEARCHES	757.7	0.00	12	17000	4250	25	26	29	25	-.01	250	1000
2.990	3.590	ARAB STEEL 5 IDES	28.4	2.86	2	11000	28500	3.85	2.60	2.60	3.50	-.09	2.500	183
650	610	KIDRIST ARAB. 781	-	0.00	12	9944	2317	64	64	64	64	-.01	390	063
810	780	JORDAN STEEL	24.4	5.58	30	69000	53971	77	77	76	76	-.01	762	460
1510	900	ARAB REFIN. CO.	-	0.00	16	169100	82671	50	90	88	49	-.01	487	1802
630	590	ARAB REFIN. CO.	-	0.00	60	24627	29464	1.04	1.16	1.06	1.16	-.12	1.051	69
350	390	RAFI TRAM. 891	-	0.00	129	159715	84434	62	73	63	73	+.10	929	1597
740	720	IND. RESEARCH	15.6	0.00	90	104928	31900	72	72	72	72	-.01	305	1493
700	620	RAFI TRAM. 891	-	0.00	12	4100	7979	72	72	70	70	-.02	702	103
1040	950	IND. RESEARCH	757.7	0.00	17	25019	110607	97	68	66	67	-.03	604	250
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Chang hangs on; Rafter reaches U.S. Open semis

NEW YORK (AFP) — Michael Chang survived another five-set battle here Thursday, outlasting Marcelo Rios to reach the semi-finals of the U.S. Open tennis championships.

Chang, the World No. 2 and second seed remained as the highest seed — and only American — left in the final four with a 7-5, 6-2, 4-6, 4-6, 6-3 victory.

While five-set matches are nothing new to Chang — he took his record in them to 20-9 — he admitted that he had felt the pressure after World No. 1 Pete Sampras lost in the fourth round.

"It's a bit of a new situation for me," Chang said. "Even though I'm No. 2 in the world I don't usually go into Grand Slams favoured."

"To be honest, the pressure did get to me."

But he advanced to his second straight U.S. Open semi-final, where he will face 13th-seeded Australian Pat Rafter.

Rafter took less than two hours to defeat unseeded Swede Magnus Larsson 7-6 (7/4), 6-4, 6-2.

Chang earned the decisive break in the eighth game of the fifth set, but had to save two break points in the next game before he won it all with a forehand winner.

They had traded breaks in the fourth set when Rios



Tenth seed Marcelo Rios from Chile hits a return to opponent Michael Chang from the United States (Reuters photo)

broke for 5-4 with an outstanding game. The 10th seed gave himself the break point when he nailed a forehand while sliding backwards, then blasted a forehand winner down the line.

"That was an unbelievable match," said Chang, who sat in his chair and buried his head in a towel when it was done.

Rios had never taken a set off Chang in four previous

meetings.

Chang appeared to be on his way to another straightforward victory when he won the first two sets with breaks in the last game of each.

But when Rios grabbed an early break to lead 2-1 in the third, he began to play with more confidence, hurting Chang not only from the baseline but also at the net.

"He started to play bet-

ter," Chang said. "I didn't think I played bad tennis at all in the third and fourth sets. He hung tough, he didn't give me anything."

Rios had survived two five-setters, against Kenneth Carlsen in the second round and Tommy Haas in the third, to reach the quarters.

On Tuesday, Chang came within two points of defeat but rallied to win 11 of the final 12 games and beat

France's Cedric Pioline 6-3, 0-6, 5-7, 7-5, 6-1 in the fourth round.

Rafter's victory, in contrast, was as brisk as the chilly, blustery weather.

True, the 13th-seeded Aussie needed four match points, but he advanced to his second Grand Slam semi-final of the year in just one hour and 49 minutes.

"Final set, I had no chance at all," said Larsson, who admitted he thought Rafter's first serve on his first match point should have been an ace.

It was called out, and Larsson saved the point with a winner off Rafter's second serve. A double fault from Rafter and a good cross-court shot from Larsson and they were at deuce, but Rafter put away a backhand volley and a service winner to finish it.

"I know the ball was good," Larsson said of the first match point. "On hardcourt, you never know ... I would like to see him serve it out."

It was the second time that Larsson's U.S. Open bid was ended by an Aussie in the quarter-finals.

He lost to Wally Masur in the same round in 1993. Masur was the last Australian to reach the U.S. Open semi-finals, losing in '93 to eventual runner-up Pioline.



Second seed Michael Chang from the United States celebrates winning a five set match against Chilean Marcelo Rios in U.S. Open quarterfinal play. Chang defeated Rios 7-5 6-2 4-6 4-6 6-3 (Reuters photo)

Rusedski will try his best to honour Diana

NEW YORK (AFP) — In an emotional test of fabled British resolve, Greg Rusedski's long-awaited moment of personal triumph comes on the day his adopted homeland says goodbye to its beloved Princess of Wales.

Rusedski plays his first career Grand Slam semi-final on his 24th birthday here at the U.S. Open on Saturday, the same day a mourning Britain buries Diana, Princess of Wales, who died Sunday in a Paris car crash.

"Tennis is not even important compared to that tragedy," Rusedski said. "The tennis is so secondary it's not even relevant."

But it is what Rusedski does. And before 23,000 at Arthur Ashe Stadium Court, he will be a very public representative of how all who were shaken by Diana's death must try to put aside their grief and go on with life.

"It's going to be a difficult task, but I'm just going to go out there and try my best and hopefully I will be able to handle the situation," he said.

"I will be thinking of her and her family while I will be out there, hopefully try to do my best on the tennis court for them," Rusedski said.

Rusedski, the first British man in a U.S. Open semi-final since Mike Sangster in 1961, could become the first British man to win a Grand Slam title since Fred Perry won Wimbledon in 1936 if he beats Jonas Bjorkman.

"It has been a difficult period for everyone. It's going to be more difficult on Saturday having to play a match while the funeral is on. It's going to be very difficult in that respect."

Flags here are being flown at half mast in honour of Diana.

Rusedski, who has worn a black ribbon on his shirt during matches since her death, plans to watch the funeral services on television.

"I will probably watch because, I mean, it's a sad occasion," he said. "I mean, she was a great humanitarian, did a lot of great things for the world. Just out of respect I will probably watch."

A Montreal-born son of an English-born mother, Rusedski switched from Canadian to British citizenship in 1995. He became British No. 1 here, rising to 20th in the world, one place above Tim Henman.

"The public supports both of us. They're very fair. They treat us as equals. I feel that way."

Rusedski plans to delay any birthday celebration until the following weekend, when he hopes to be in another semi-final. He will play next week in Bournemouth to support a British event and keep his word.

"We don't have many tournaments at home. I don't want to let down the public who have bought tickets and come to see the event," he said.

World Cup qualifying roundup Germany without Moeller; Holland face Belgium as Scots play Sunday

PARIS (AFP) — Germany go into Saturday's vital World Cup Group 9 qualifier against Portugal in Berlin without playmaker Andreas Moeller.

The midfielder travelled home to Dortmund Thursday for therapy on a shoulder he dislocated last weekend in Stuttgart.

The injury robs the game of a fascinating contest between Moeller and his Dortmund team-mate Paulo Sousa. Both are vying for the key playmaker role at the European club champions.

It is a race Moeller has so far been winning, largely because of continued problems with Sousa's delicate knee which caused Juventus to sell him to Dortmund in the first place.

Thomas Haessler will assume Moeller's creative midfield duties on Saturday, starting for the first time since he broke his ankle at the beginning of the year.

Victory for the Germans would take them to the top of Group 9 for the first time in their qualifying campaign, overtaking Ukraine by two points with a game in hand.

Another good result against Armenia next Wednesday should guarantee passage to next year's World Cup finals.

Saturday's match is vital on a personal level for Germany captain Juergen Klinsmann, the striker who has apparently forgotten how to put the ball into the back of the net.

His last 694 minutes in the national colours have been goalless.

If the blonde Blitz doesn't score in either of Germany's next two games, coach Berti Vogts has warned he will reluctantly have to drop his captain.

"I've never had such a dry spell in the national team before but except for Tottenham it happened at every other club I've played for too," an upbeat Klinsmann said.

"But I don't feel myself unfairly treated. I've been around long enough to know how to deal with situations like this. Of course I'm not happy with the way things are but I have enough experience to see them through."

Holland tackle Belgium in

Rotterdam in a Group 7 clash that could decide who takes the automatic qualifiers spot.

Both teams have 15 points from six games, with Guus Hiddink's Dutch side currently top courtesy of a greatly superior goal difference.

With both teams facing final matches at home, it could be win or bust for Belgium on Saturday.

Hiddink has been boosted by the quick recovery from injury of defenders Winston Bogarde, of AC Milan, and Barcelona's Michael Reiziger.

Another Milan player Patrick Kluivert is likely to partner Arsenal's in-form Dennis Bergkamp up front.

Pierre van Hooijdonk, with seven goals in six games for Nottingham Forest, will have to be content with a place on the bench.

Scotland manager Craig Brown is giving his players and backroom staff time off during the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, on Saturday morning.

The World Cup qualifier against Belarus has been switched to Sunday following a storm of protest throughout Britain.

Derby's Chris O'Donnell is expected to win his fourth successive cap at Aberdeen, especially as Blackburn's Colin Hendry is injured.

Brown has also been heartened by the performance of skipper Gary McAllister during training.

The Coventry midfielder has been sidelined since August 11 after suffering a knee injury against Arsenal.

But he looks likely to face Belarus and Daily, for one, is grateful that McAllister is on his side.

"Gary has a massive influence on the team," he said. "You know that if you are a tight corner he will always try and make space and help you out."

"He always wants the ball and never hides, even if he is having a bad game, which is not very often."

The Scots cannot afford to slip up in the Group 4 match, with Austria and Sweden, a point and two points behind respectively, clashing in Vienna on

Saturday night.

That is a match the Swedes, semi-finalists at the last World Cup, really need to win if they are to muscle in on qualification following a bad start to their campaign this time.

Republic of Ireland players will wear black armbands as a mark of respect to the late Princess of Wales when they play Iceland in Reykjavik on Saturday.

The gesture has been encouraged by Ireland's large contingent of English-born players led by skipper Andy Townsend.

Football Association of Ireland (FAI) chief executive Bernard O'Byrne said: "It is something we wanted to do because there is a big depth of feeling in Dublin and the rest of Ireland over this tragedy."

The Republic have been hit by a rash of injuries ahead of the match.

Strikers Niall Quinn and David Kelly, midfielder Ray Houghton and defender Curtis Fleming have all withdrawn and forward Keith O'Neill is set to add to the list after being sent for an X-ray on a suspected broken foot.

McCarthy's side need maximum points from both this game and next Wednesday's clash in Lithuania to keep alive their chances of finishing runners-up in a Group B already won by Romania.

Much will depend on Saturday's game between Macedonia and Lithuania. Macedonia, who will be at home, are currently second on 13 points, two points clear of the Irish, who themselves lead Lithuania only on goal difference.

Elsewhere Norway will clinch qualification by avoiding defeat in Baku against Azerbaijan. The Scandinavians are unbeaten at the top of Group 3, six points clear of Hungary with two games to play.

More gold medals on offer at Sydney Olympics

SYDNEY (AFP) — The 2000 Sydney Olympics will have 24 more gold medals on offer than at last year's Atlanta Games, organisers said Friday.

Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games said in a statement that athletes would compete for 295 gold medals compared with Atlanta's 271.

The committee said the majority of the extra gold medals will be decided in women's events.

There will be 21 extra women's events in Sydney across nine sports, which could be increased when international federations decide on women's water polo, women's pole vault and women's hammer throw.

Women athletes will be competing in 24 of the 28 sports at the 2000 Olympics, only missing out on baseball, boxing, modern pentathlon and wrestling.

Triathlon and taekwondo, new sports introduced for the Sydney Olympics, and the canoe/kayak slalom will provide equal opportunity for women's participation.

Sydney committee President Michael Knight, in Lausanne, said the International Olympic Committee Executive Board had approved several venue changes for the Sydney Games, resulting in more than 176,000 extra tickets.

Hingis looks for revenge; Williams meets Spirlea in semis

NEW YORK (AFP) — Martina Hingis dispatched her first five U.S. Open opponents in less than five hours. Now her battle for her third Grand Slam title of the year really starts.

"It is not over yet," said Hingis, who has been all but crowned champion in the wake of second seed Monica Seles' quarter-final exit.

"Now, I think, it is just beginning."

Hingis reached the final four without dropping a set, playing a total of four hours and 36 minutes to vanquish her first five opponents.

But in the semi-finals she meets perhaps her most dangerous foe in sixth seed Lindsay Davenport, one of only two women to heat Hingis all year.

Davenport, playing in her first Grand Slam semi-final, defeated a worn-out Hingis in the WTA Tour final at Los Angeles in August.

She said she expected to meet a different Hingis on Friday.

"In L.A., she didn't play her best, and I knew that," Davenport said. "I have to try not to let her play her best, not let her be in position to dictate and put the ball where she wants it to be."

It's a tall order against the smiling 16-year-old who in March became the youngest World No. 1 ever.

"I'm just going to have to try for revenge or something," Hingis said.

The second semi-final sees 17-year-old Venus Williams trying to reach the

final in her U.S. Open debut.

But she'll have to get past 11th-seeded Irina Spirlea, the 23-year-old Romanian who ousted two-time champion Seles, and who has been forthright in her opinion that unproven tennis teens are getting too much attention.

Williams, ranked 66th in the world, has far less match experience than Hingis, but she has been thrust into the spotlight as a potential new American star and so far she is thriving there.

"I like it," she said of playing on the spectacular new 23,000-seat Arthur Ashe stadium court. "I always liked to play on big courts in front of people."

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL:634144	CINEMA TEL:634144	CINEMA TEL:699238	CINEMA TEL:677420	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155	
	PHILADELPHIA "1"	PHILADELPHIA "2"	PLAZA	CONCORD	The satirical play	
	Val Kilmer & Elizabeth Shue..in		Nabila Obeid... in	CONCORD "1"	AMN AI AI YA HO	
	THE SAINT	THE LOST WORLD (JURASSIC PARK)	AL MARA' WAL SATOUR (Arabic)	CONCORD "2"	performance starts at 8:30 p.m.	
	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	ACE VENTURA 1 Shows: 3:30, 6:00 only	The theatre is closed every Friday. For reservations call 625155	

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Maradona to appear before disciplinary committee

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — Football star Diego Maradona has been called to appear before the disciplinary committee of the Argentine Football Association on Tuesday after testing positive for a banned substance.

The association also said Thursday Maradona's lawyers will be told what illegal substance was detected in his urine test.

Maradona tested positive Wednesday in a follow-up analysis that confirmed a test from more than a week ago. Officials would not immediately reveal the exact banned substance but Maradona has admitted he is addicted to cocaine.

Maradona had already tested positive for drugs twice before: In 1991 when he was playing for Napoli and during the 1994 World Cup in the United States.

The latest test could effectively end the 21-year career of the football legend, who turns 37 next month and has been suspended provisionally.



Canadian Jacques Villeneuve puts on his gloves before driving his Williams car during the first session of the first free practice day for the Italian Grand Prix at Monza. Villeneuve recorded a best time of 1:25.226 (Reuters photo)

Asia's teams battle for World Cup places today

HONG KONG (AFP) — Iran and South Korea are the favourites among 10 nations who Saturday start the final battle for Asia's spots at next year's World Cup finals.

However both can expect bitter rivalry and the World Cup fever being whipped up is expected to see most of the 40 matches across the continent sell out.

The winners of the two groups of five will automatically go to France '98 and the two second placed teams will meet to determine Asia's third entrant. But even the loser of that game will still get a chance in a two match playoff with Australia, the Oceania group winners now coached by former England manager Terry Venables, on November 22 and November 29.

South Korea, seeking to reach the World Cup finals for the fourth consecutive time, start Group B against Kazakhstan in the Seoul Olympic stadium on Saturday.

Iran, featuring three players in the German First Division, head Group A, which also includes 1994 qualifiers Saudi Arabia, China, Gulf Cup holders Kuwait and Qatar.

The Kazakhs knocked out the fancied Iraq in the first round group and respected South Korean coach Cha Bum-Kun knows any slip up will make life difficult for the rest of the 67 days of the contest.

Also in the group are

Japan, 1994 Asian Games champions Uzbekistan and United Arab Emirates, who still have many of the side that reached the 1990 finals.

Japan, co-hosts of the 2002 finals with South Korea, start against the rugged Uzbeks in Tokyo on Sunday. And they are desperate to succeed so they are not the only country to host a World Cup final without ever reaching one.

They are still haunted by the last minute by Iraq four years ago that stopped them going to the U.S. finals in 1994.

Coach Shu Komo has kept faith with veteran striker Kazuyoshi Miura and is hoping youngsters Hidetoshi Nakata, Shoji Jo and Yoshikazu Kawaguchi will at last fulfill their promise on the international stage.

The UAE, who were second place behind Saudi Arabia in the Asian Cup last December, suffered a blow when astute Croatian coach Tomislav Ivic left after Brazilian Lori Sandri is now in charge.

Iran start their campaign in China on September 13 relying heavily on Asian player of the year Khodadad Azizi, and fellow Bundesliga stars Ali Daei and Karim Bagheri, who hit seven goals in Iran's 17-0 destruction of Maldives in World Cup qualifying this year.

As part of a bid to meet the massive expectations of Chinese fans, China post-

poned its league and embarked on a five match tour of England.

Wins over Chelsea, Crystal Palace and Nottingham Forest indicated that the sharpening up exercise was worthwhile.

With former England coach Ted Buxton helping as a consultant, the Chinese are hoping that the simple mistakes that robbed them of their first qualification in 1989, will not be repeated.

All their home matches will be in the northern city of Dalian, and local striker Hao Haidong is a lethal finisher while Fan Zhili expertly marshalls the defence. Buxton has said Fan could easily make the grade in the English Premier League.

Saudi Arabia made friends with their attacking style at the 1994 finals and winning the Asian Cup was an important preparatory boost for this contest.

Sami Al Jaber is one of the best strikers in Asia and coach Eduardo Vingaado can also call on the ever reliable Mohammad Al Daeyea in goal and Abdullah Suleiman and Mohammad Al Khilawi in central defence.

"I think Group A will be the most difficult group. All five teams have a chance, especially with each side having four games at home," said Vingaado.

"We were expecting an October start to the competition and the earlier start will cause us problems but we will do our best."



Yufu Lu of China performs his vault exercise during the men's team final of the World Gymnastic Championships in Lausanne. China is one of six teams to take part in the finals (Reuters photo)

China, Romania take gymnastics honours

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AFP) — China's men retained their team title at the World Championships here on Thursday, while Romania's women won their third consecutive world crown.

The Chinese dominated the men's event, taking gold with 226.117 points. Belarus took silver on 221.568, with Olympic champions Russia collecting bronze on 220.682.

A disastrous display on the high bar again cost the Russians.

Alexei Bondarenko scored 7.625 while star performer Alexei Nemov could muster only 8.225.

The Russians never recovered, falling into last place overall and only snatching the bronze on the last apparatus, the vault.

In contrast, China looked invincible.

Zhang Jinjing was the best individual on display, scoring a superb 9.737 on the parallel bars to cap a brilliant all-round display.

He will battle with Nemov and Belarussian Ivan Ivankov for the individual title on Friday.

The women's competition provided more disappointment for the Russians as the Romanian team shrugged the absence of the retired Lavinia Milosovic to take the gold medal on 153.720 points.

Gina Gogean and Simona Amanar provided the backbone of the new lineup, and they were simply too good for the opposition.

Gogean, 20, is to retire after the championships.

The Russians made do with silver on 153.197, though they had the best individual performer in Svetlana Khorkina, China finished third on 152.001.

L.A. Dodgers on sale for \$350 million

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Rupert Murdoch's Fox Group announced an agreement in principle Thursday to buy the Los Angeles Dodgers baseball franchise for an undisclosed price.

The deal is believed to be worth about \$350 million, making it one of the biggest transactions in sports history.

Major League Baseball granted permission to both sides to announce the agreement, which comes after several days of talks. The agreement between Fox and Peter O'Malley, owner of the Dodgers, is subject to approval by baseball team owners.

"We are very excited with the potential opportunity of carrying on one of the greatest winning traditions in all of sports," said Peter Chernin, chairman and chief executive officer of the Fox Group.

O'Malley stunned the sports world by announcing in January that the Dodgers were for sale. Four months later, he requested permission to enter serious discussions with Fox, which was granted July 30.

If the deal goes through, the Dodgers would become part of a worldwide empire controlled by the Australian-born magnate that includes newspapers, the Fox television network, cable and satellite operations on six continents.

O'Malley has served as president of the Dodgers since 1970 after replacing his father, Walter, who took control of the Dodgers in 1950. Walter O'Malley moved the franchise from Brooklyn to Los Angeles following the 1957 season.

The purchase price of the Dodgers could double the previous baseball record, set when Peter Angelos bought the Baltimore Orioles for \$172 million in 1993.

The price tag is much higher since the

team also owns Dodger Stadium and the land on which the facility is located. The team also owns its spring training facility in Vero Beach, Florida and the Dodgers' Dominican Academy outside Santo Domingo.

The agreement now goes to Major League Baseball's eight-member ownership committee for preliminary approval. If that is granted, Fox would need 12 of 15 National League teams to approve the vote and eight of 15 American League clubs to do so.

Fox reportedly already has taken informal polls and has received at least two "no" votes — one from the Florida Marlins and the other from the Atlanta Braves, owned by rival media magnate Ted Turner.

It is believed that O'Malley also is interested in selling the team for tax purposes and wants to avoid a fight over the team among his three children and his sister's 10 children. O'Malley recently has been a detractor of acting commissioner Bud Selig and has been critical of some of the decisions of his fellow owners.

The acquisition would be a major victory for Fox, which is in the second year of a four-year, \$565 million deal to televise baseball. Fox also has national broadcast rights to the National Football League (NFL) and the National Hockey League (NHL).

Earlier this season, the Dodgers surpassed the two million mark in attendance for the 25th straight year and are on the verge of eclipsing 3 million for the 12th time in Los Angeles. The announcement came after a three game losing streak by the Dodgers.

The O'Malleys are second in seniority among baseball ownership groups behind the Yawkey family, which purchased the Boston Red Sox in 1933.

Samaranch to see out century

LAUSANNE (AFP) — Juan Antonio Samaranch, re-elected president of the International Olympic Committee for a fourth term on Thursday, has transformed the Olympic movement in the last 17 years.

IOC assets now stand at \$100 million — 10 times the amount when Samaranch took over — and professional sportsmen can now take part in the Olympics.

The former Spanish ambassador to Moscow, who had the retirement age raised from 75 to 80 in 1995 to allow himself to run again, was re-elected unopposed when the deadline for candidates closed on Thursday.

Samaranch, 77, will be 81 in 2001 when he should step down after being in charge of the Olympic movement since 1980.

However, Avery Brundage of the United States was 81 when he started his last term which took him to the Munich Olympics in 1972.

Olympic founder Baron Pierre de Coubertin's 29 years at the helm makes him the longest-serving IOC president.

Samaranch had two years to campaign for the presidency after Lord Killanin announced in 1978 he would not run again, but left possible rivals only five

months to mount a challenge after announcing this March he would stand again.

Switzerland's Marc Hodler, Canada's James Worrall - and Germany's Willi Daume - opposed Samaranch in 1980 but he has now been re-elected unopposed three times.

The first time was in Puerto Rico in 1989, when he had persuaded the IOC to give him an extra year to avoid the presidential election being held at the same time as an Olympic Games, and the second was in Monte Carlo in 1993.

A year after being elected Samaranch decided to pay IOC members' expenses for attending sessions. He has set up a score of commissions, which critics say keep members happy travelling the world, and given himself the power to put forward up to 10 new members every year. There are 111 members now compared with the 80 when he took over.

Unlike Lord Killanin, he decided to be a hands-on president and took up residence in Lausanne. He endured a strained working relationship with his IOC director Monique Berlioux, who had run the IOC under Lord Killanin, for five years before she was forced out in 1985.

In 1992 he warned IOC

members to be cautious about what they said to the press after a highly critical book, the Lord of the Rings, was published.

He can be credited with bringing South Africa, excluded for its apartheid policies since the 1960 Games, back into the Olympic fold in 1992.

He also stood up to United Nations interference, notably in 1992 when he sidestepped a ban on Yugoslavia by admitting their athletes as independent competitors.

After a second successive Olympic boycott at Los Angeles in 1984, this time a tit-for-tat move by the Soviet bloc following the U.S.-led boycott of the Moscow Games, Samaranch was able to persuade all but North Korea and Cuba to go to Seoul for the 1988 Olympics.

Full houses at his home Games of 1992 in Barcelona and last year at Atlanta, and multi-billion dollar deals with television companies leave the IOC sitting pretty.

Most of all, a conservative IOC is anxious not to rock the boat and, as Samaranch himself says, his biggest feat has been to get the 198 National Olympic Committees and international sports federations to work together.

Scottish official blames FIFA over qualifier

GLASGOW (AFP) — A leading Scottish football official said Thursday that FIFA were to blame for the delay in postponing Scotland's World Cup match against Belarus this weekend.

The Scottish Football Association (SFA) provoked a national outcry by originally refusing to call off the game which was scheduled to kick-off shortly after the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, on Saturday.

As the protests intensified, the SFA finally announced that the qualifying tie would be postponed like all other major sporting events in Britain on Saturday.

But the apparent reluctance of the Scottish authorities to move the fixture — which has been switched to the Sunday — in the first place, has led to calls for the resignation of Jim Farry, chief executive of the SFA.

However, Rangers secretary Campbell Ogilvie, a member of the SFA's International Committee, blamed FIFA for the initial decision to play on.

Although the world governing body were quick to ratify the lock-off change of Sunday afternoon agreed between the two countries, Ogilvie suggested FIFA were less accommodating when a switch was first mooted.

He said: "I want to make it clear the International Committee never actually met on Tuesday afternoon because the

logistics of that were impossible.

"We were each individually told by telephone by the SFA that the decision to play on had to be taken because FIFA wanted the game to go ahead as scheduled."

"That effectively meant there was no decision to be made, but after the outcry there seemed to be a shift in FIFA's stance."

"At first the SFA were

informed by FIFA the match should go ahead and that was really the end of discussions."

"In the light of the enormous depth of public feeling on the matter, pressure was put on FIFA and they started shifting."

"The criticism of Jim Farry has been made by those not fully informed — perhaps not aware that the SFA were advised to go ahead."

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The deadline Sept. 15, 1997.

Unprecedented, Queen addresses nation after royal blitz on London to show royalty cares about Di's tragic death

Combined agency dispatches

QUEEN ELIZABETH paid an emotional and heartfelt tribute to Diana, the Princess of Wales, Friday, and acknowledged there were "lessons to be drawn" from her life.

"I for one believe that there are lessons to be drawn from her life and from the extraordinary and moving reaction to her death," said the queen, dressed in black and wearing a pearl collar and brooch.

"I share in your determination to cherish her memory," she said.

In an unprecedented live broadcast to the nation, the queen, clearly moved, described Diana as a "remarkable person."

Seated before a window through which could be seen crowds massed outside the palace, she said she was speaking to the nation "as your queen and as a grandmother" and "from my heart."

She spoke of her admiration and respect for Diana and for her "energy and commitment to others, and especially for her devotion to her two boys."

She also described her as an "exceptional and gifted" human being. "In good times and bad, she never lost her capacity to smile and laugh, nor to inspire others with her warmth and kindness."

"No one who knew Diana will ever forget her. Millions of others who never met her, but felt they knew her, will remember her."



Queen Elizabeth meets members of the public waiting in a queue to sign the book of condolence for Princess Diana outside St. James's Palace, Friday. The princess will be buried on the family estate of Althorp House after a ceremony at Westminster Abbey today (Reuters photo)

The queen also responded to criticisms that she and the royal family had kept themselves isolated from the general outpouring of mourning across the nation.

"This week at Balmoral, we have all been trying to help William and Harry come to terms with the devastating loss that they and the rest of us have suffered."

William, 15, second in line to the throne after Prince Charles and his younger brother, Harry, 12, have captured the nation's sympathy as they struggle to come to terms with their mother's death.

The queen spoke of the overwhelming expression of sadness throughout Britain and around the world since

Diana's death Sunday.

"It is not easy to express a sense of loss, since the initial shock is often succeeded by a mixture of other feelings: disbelief, incomprehension, anger — and concern for those who remain," she said.

"We have all felt those emotions in these last few days," she added.

"I hope that tomorrow we can all, wherever we are, join in expressing our grief at Diana's loss, and gratitude for her all-too-short life," she urged.

"It is a chance to show to the whole world the British nation united in grief and respect," the queen said.

The live broadcast marked a complete change from the

Spencer family take civil action over crash

PARIS (AFP) — Princess Diana's mother and one of her sisters have taken civil legal action over the crash which killed her last weekend, judicial sources said Friday. The pair filed civil proceedings Tuesday in parallel with the criminal investigation already launched by an examining magistrate into the crash, which also killed her boyfriend Dodi Fayed, the sources said. Under French law, their action will give them access to investigation documents, and will also allow them to claim damages if legal action is taken against photographers charged with manslaughter over the case. Paris lawyer Alain Toussaint said he had been instructed to take the action by Diana's mother and one of her sisters. He did not specify which one. Dodi Fayed's father Mohammed Fayed has already taken such civil legal action, as have lawyers for the driver of the crash car, Henri Paul, who is reported to have been more than three times over the legal drink limit.

queen's usual austere style. She seemed less remote, spoke simply and clearly

from the heart.

(Continued on page 7)

Timetable for 'a unique occasion'

LONDON (AFP) — The funeral for Diana, Princess of Wales, "a unique occasion for a unique person" according to Buckingham Palace, is a compromise between her family's need for remembrance, the nation's desire to pay its last respects and the monarchy's attachment to protocol.

The princess's body will leave her former home Kensington Palace on a gun carriage at 9.08 a.m. after being moved there from the royal chapel at St. James Palace the previous night.

Each minute of the procession, which is expected to last almost two hours, will be marked by the part-muffled chiming of a single bell at Westminster Abbey.

Arriving at the Mall, the famous tree-lined avenue stretching from Buckingham Palace to Trafalgar Square, the procession will be joined by 533 people representing the 106 charities and organisations with which the princess worked.

It will be here that, if they so decide, Princess Diana's former husband Prince Charles and the couple's two sons, Princes William, 15, and Harry, 12, will join the cortege and follow it to Westminster Abbey.

The service will start at 11 a.m. as the congregation of 1,900 takes up the national

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Palace said Thursday that Her Majesty Queen Noor will be attending the funeral of the late Princess Diana in London today. The Queen will be accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Hamzah.

Meanwhile, Jordan Television announced Friday that it will be airing live coverage of the funeral procession starting 11:00 a.m. Jordan time.

anthem "God Save The Queen," just after which Princess Diana's coffin will be brought into the Abbey.

Reverend Wesley Carr, Dean of Westminster, will make a few introductory announcements and a tribute to the princess. Then the congregation will sing the hymn "I Vow to Thee my Country," one of Princess Diana's favourites and one which was sung at her marriage in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1981.

Lady Sarah McCorquodale, one of the princess's two sisters, will then read a poem, the soprano Lynne Dawson will sing an extract — "Libera me, Domine, de Morte Aeterna" — from Giuseppe Verdi's requiem and Princess Diana's other sister Lady Jane Fellowes will then recite another poem.

(Continued on page 7)

After holding hands with son, British press supports Charles

LONDON (R) — Britain's newspapers, violent in their attacks on the royal family Thursday, turned on the taps of compassion and sympathy Friday at the sight of Prince Charles holding the hand of his younger son, Harry.

The heir to the throne, often portrayed as cold and distant, clutched his 12-year-old's hand as the royal family inspected bouquets placed at the gates of their Scottish estate in tribute to

Prince Harry's divorced mother, Princess Diana, who died in a car crash last Sunday.

"In safe hands" read the front page of the Daily Mirror under a huge picture of the killed Prince Charles and Prince Harry looking at the bouquets. "Hold my hand tight, daddy" read the daily Star's front page.

On Thursday, the press had turned on the royal family and Queen Elizabeth in particular, accusing them of

ignoring the public mood of grief at Princess Diana's death.

Buckingham Palace reacted by announcing that the queen would make a televised statement Friday evening about Princess Diana's death and by making a number of changes to protocol surrounding her funeral Saturday.

Since Princess Diana and Prince Charles split up in

(Continued on page 7)

Beijing denies providing weapons to Iran and Iraq

BEIJING (AFP) — Beijing categorically denied Thursday having provided Iran and Iraq with military equipment, saying that an American report on an arms programme for the two Middle-Eastern countries was "without basis."

"We deny it," said Chinese foreign affairs spokesman Shen Guofang, when questioned on the report by the American Navy which said that China had sold Iran and Iraq technology for their arms programme.

"We firmly respect the rules of the United Nations in all our arms sales, including that of Iran and Iraq," Mr. Shen said.

"We are very strict on all arms transfers which we register before the United Nations," he said. The allegations of the American Navy, reported Monday by the Washington Times, are "without basis," he insisted.

The document incriminated China following the recent discovery of "illegal chemical products" of Chinese origin bound for the Middle East on board a Saudi Arabian navy vessel meant for "the production of fuel for missiles in Iraq."

"A similar situation prevails in Iran, with a constant transfer of materials and technology from China to Iran," the report said.

The alleged exchanges between Beijing and the two Middle Eastern countries constitute "one of the most active armament programmes for mass destruction in the Third World, and they are taking place in a strategic region very important to the United States," the U.S. Navy report said.

Due to Israeli racism against Jews from Arab origin 3 Israelis representing 500 people seek asylum in Palestinian areas

JERICHO (AFP) — Three homeless Israelis sought asylum to live under the Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) rule Thursday and said 500 others would soon follow, fleeing "Israeli racism."

The three men, all Israeli Jews of Arab origin who were released on bail by Israel after trying to seize flats in Jerusalem by force, approached Palestinian security in the self-rule enclave of Jericho and requested asylum.

"We represent 114 families, with a total of 500 people, and all of us plan to come here to ask the Palestinians for refuge, if they are able to take us," said Rafi Avivi, one of the three men.

"They will get here as soon as possible, but our three families will arrive here later tonight," he said and made a call on Israeli authorities not to pressure the Palestinians for their return.

"We don't want to leave here," he said. The head of Palestinian security in the West Bank,

Jabril Rajouh, who met with the three, said their request had been passed on to the Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in Gaza, but as yet there was no response.

"We are not at all bothered by their presence here, especially since they came of their own accord," Mr. Rajouh said. Mr. Avivi said the families "face racist discrimination inside Israel because we are originally from Arab countries, so we decided we want to live here."

Mr. Avivi and his fellow asylum seeker Eli Dahan are from families originally from Morocco. The third man, Shlomo Buzit, emigrated to Israel from Tunisia four years ago. The three were arrested over the weekend after beating and evicting a family from its apartment in an immigrant absorption centre in the Jerusalem suburb of Mevasseret Zion.

The three then moved into the apartment with their families and when confronted by police, threatened to blow up the building and their families with gas canisters unless

authorities provided them with housing.

Anti-terrorist police stormed the apartment and arrested the three men. They were released on bail Tuesday and a Jerusalem regional court warned them Thursday not to enter Jerusalem or Mevasseret Zion.

They led a group of 114 families that began squatting in the Mevasseret Zion absorption centre two months ago but had been twice thrown out in large police raids.

To protest the high costs of housing, the squatter group had forced their way into residences meant for new immigrants who receive government subsidies for housing.

Sephardic Jews often complain in Israel that they are discriminated against by an establishment dominated by Ashkenazi Jews of European origin.

The new immigrants come mostly from Russia.

A government commission set up to look into the complaints of the squatters has not yet come up with a solution.



OLYMPICS COME BACK HOME: Athens has been awarded the 2004 summer Olympics by the International Olympic Committee, President Juan Antonio Samaranch announced, Friday. This undated aerial view shows the Athens was one of five cities bidding for the 2004 summer Olympic games, together with Rome, Stockholm, Buenos Aires and Cape Town (Reuters file photo)



Turkish riot police chase Islamist demonstrators during a demonstration in front of 16th century Beyazit Mosque in Istanbul, Friday. Police arrested scores of demonstrators as a protest against the government's secular education reforms became violent (Reuters photo)

Turkey deports foreign peace activists

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish police began Friday to deport 15 foreign peace activists detained for organising an unauthorised news conference, security officials said.

Three German citizens were expelled this morning. The other 12 will be deported later in the day, a police officer told Reuters.

The activists were detained Wednesday after security forces broke up the impromptu news conference at an Istanbul hotel about ways to find a peaceful end to Turkey's Kurdish conflict.

They came to Turkey to campaign for a negotiated end to 13 years of conflict between security forces and the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebel group. More than 26,000 people have died in the fighting.

Police officials said earlier that the news conference was forbidden under a law which bans demonstrations in Turkey by foreigners who have not obtained prior permission.

The activists were remanded in police custody following an Istanbul court's rule Thursday not to drop charges against the

group.

The mostly German group was part of an aborted trans-European "peace train," organised by a pro-Kurdish group in Germany, which was prevented by police from demonstrating in the southeastern city of Diyarbakir earlier this week.

Turkey suspects them of sympathy with the PKK, which is fighting for self-rule in the mainly Kurdish southeast. Some of the detainees were asked by the court prosecutor if they had any links with the rebels.

Fleas attack policemen, one hurt

THIONVILLE (AFP) — A French policeman was rushed to hospital suffering from massive flea-bites after coming under attack from a swarm of the tiny, blood-sucking insects, police said Friday. The officer, along with a colleague, had barely opened the door of a house in Algrange, near Thionville, to undertake a routine investigation of a robbery when the swarm of fleas flew at them. In pain from the bites, one of the men was rushed to hospital where he was disinfected and given an anti-allergic shot before being allowed home.

HK chief has two names, two birthdays

HONG KONG (AFP) — Tung Chee-Hwa is not only the chief executive of Hong Kong under the famed slogan of "one country, two systems," he is also a leader with two names and two birthdays, his office revealed Thursday. While the public has come to grips with the spelling of his name since he took up his post when China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong on July 1, a spokesman for the chief executive said his name was listed on his travel documents as Tung Chi-Hwa. She was unable to explain the discrepancy, adding: "This is something personal to Mr. Tung." Tung's passport also carries his date of birth under the lunar calendar, the 29th day of the fifth month of 1937. His birthday under the Western system most commonly used here is July 7, 1937. Tung celebrates both occasions.

Madonna buys new digs in Soho

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Singer Madonna is apparently ready for a change of address and has purchased a 920-square-metre apartment in the artsy lower Manhattan neighbourhood of Soho for \$6 million, the Philadelphia Inquirer daily said. The move from Madonna's smaller Central Park West residence in midtown Manhattan is planned for early November. Meanwhile, her new digs will be remodelled. It has panoramic views of the Empire State Building, the World Trade Centre and the Hudson and East rivers.

Penn mends his ways

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Bad-boy actor Sean Penn is mending his aggressive ways thanks not to Prozac but to his family, he tells GQ magazine. Settling down with wife Robin Wright Penn and their kids did have mended his photographer-hating ways, he told the magazine. "The priority's so damned clear. Living your art doesn't mean putting your career first. Living your art is being true to growth and love." He did turn down a prescription for the anti-depressant Prozac from his doctor because, he said, "I was worried about losing the highs and lows."

U2 tour swings into Paris

PARIS (AFP) — Irish rock band U2 will swing into Paris on Saturday for the latest leg of its high-tech PopMart tour which will also include a second French gig in the southern city of Montpellier in September. Following on from the Dublin four's last extravaganza Zoo TV in 1993, PopMart, managed by Canadian tour manager Michael Cohl the manager brought the Rolling Stones back to the stage in 1995. The tour has been billed as the biggest and most sensational yet. The tour uses screens that are 90 feet long and 17 metres high, the largest used on stage.

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